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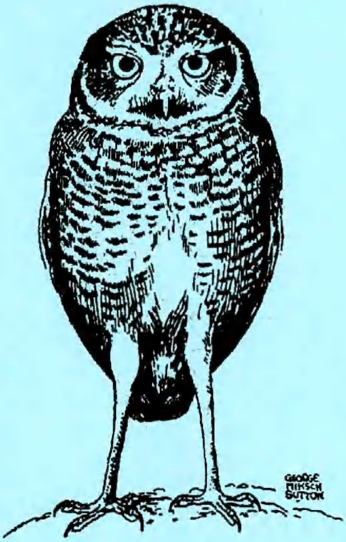

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NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION TREASURER'S REPORT December 31, 2014

	General Funds	Breeding Bird Atlas	Scholarship Fund	Endowment Fund	Total
CHECKING					
Jan. 1, 2014 Balance - Checking	15,242.60	1,158.51	829.61	0.00	17,230.72
RECEIPTS					
Memberships	3,370.00				3,370.00
Subscriptions	570.00				570.00
Joint IOU/NOU Spring Meet -Fontenelle	1,781.14				1,781.14
Fall Meet	1,340.00				1,340.00
Interest from Endow CD	268.35				268.35
Spring Silent Auction	134.00				134.00
Donations	185.00		225.00		410.00
Sub-total Receipts	7,648.49	0.00	225.00	0.00	7,873.49
DISBURSEMENTS					
Joint IOU/NOU Spring Meet -Fontenelle	117.48				117.48
Fall Meet	1,317.79				1,317.79
Libility Insurance	350.00				350.00
Hostek Website	99.95				99.95
NBR-Jun-Dec2013,Mar-Jun2014	3,682.19				3,682.19
Newsletter - Printing-6 issues	178.00				178.00
Postage-newsletter	198.59				198.59
Sub-total Disbursements	5,944.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,944.00
December 31, 2014 Balance-Checking	16,947.09	1,158.51	1,054.61	0.00	19,160.21
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT					
Jan. 1, 2014 Balance - CDs		5,000.02		35,875.60	40,875.62
Interest Earned		7.48		107.07	
Interest to Checking				(268.35)	
Dec. 31, 2014 Balance - CDs		5,007.50		35,714.32	40,721.82
Maturity		4/18/15		6/27/15	
CD Annual Rates		0.15%		0.35%	
Endowment Principal		5,000.00		35,652.00	
Grand Total					59,882.03

WINTER FIELD REPORT, December 2014 to February 2015

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INTRODUCTION

As with last winter, this was a rather ordinary winter ornithologically speaking, if indeed there is such a thing. There were a couple of genuine rarities to spice it up, but most of the interest was in unusual phenomena shown by a range of species. Ducks and swans and native sparrows seem to be more in evidence in mid-winter than in previous years, but it is difficult to relate winter occurrence to weather in any given year, except for isolated extreme events. There are, however, some trends showing up, as suggested by the ducks, swans, native sparrows and a few species like Yellow-rumped Warbler; these are discussed in the species accounts.

Rarities were an adult Brown Pelican that wintered at the Sutherland "Hot Pool", a.k.a. Cooling Pond, for the state's first winter record, and a female Brambling in Lincoln County, Nebraska's third.

Among the phenomena, evidence is accumulating for consideration of adding Mute Swan to the Official State List, and Tundra Swans are lingering well into winter rather than simply migrating through. Two American Black Ducks were westerly in Lincoln Co, there were single Dec reports of both yellowlegs species, and gulls in general were much in evidence in Feb especially as lakes thawed allowing access to fish trapped in the ice. Wayne Mollhoff's fascinating work with Saw-Whet Owls continues, westerly Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers continue to show well, and Black-billed Magpies are struggling. Mountain Chickadees continued their preferential attachment to Scotts Bluff Co, but hardly any Townsend's Solitaires showed up. Possibly unprecedented numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers were around in Feb, a Baltimore Oriole survived into Jan, there was only one report of Red Crossbill, and spotty appearances of Evening Grosbeaks continued. All this and more in the species accounts below!

As always, I welcome your comments, corrections of fact, and general thoughts. After all, much of this is my personal opinion, albeit hopefully factually-based! Contact me at silcock@rosssilcock.com.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBC: Christmas Bird Count
Cem: Cemetery
CL: Carter L, Omaha
fem: female

FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar/Knox Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res., Republican City
HL: Holmes L, Lincoln
imm: immature
ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha/Richardson Cos
juv: juvenile
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
m.ob.: many observers
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NOURC: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
Res: Reservoir
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PP: Pioneers Park, Lincoln
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
RS: Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co
SBNM: Scotts Bluff NM, Scotts Bluff Co
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
WHNC: Wildcat Hills Nature Center, Scotts Bluff Co

OBSERVERS

AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff
AF: Andrew Furman, Kearney
AFu: Amanda Fuller, Cedar Bluffs
AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering
AP: Andrew Pierson, Kearney
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue
AS: Amy Sheffield, Omaha
AW: Anita Watkins, Venango
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BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
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BG: Betty Grenon, Bellevue
BHG: Bob Hersh-Geer, Dunning
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BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
CD: Curtis Dykstra, Wyoming, MI
CL: Chuck Lesiak, Raymond
CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, Bellevue
CP: Cathy Prettyman, Blair

D&JP: Don and Jan Paseka, Ames
DE: Dave Ely, Salem, MA
DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk
DM: Dillon Molt, Albion
DMK: Donna M. King, Albion
DP: Don Poggensee, Ida Grove, IA
DT: David True, Yankton, SD
EA: Edward Allen, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EH: Eric Hope, Sidney
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
HA: Henry Armknecht, Hays, KS
J&GB: Jay & Ginger Belsan, Ogallala
JB: Joel Bierman, Battle Creek
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JCr: Jonathan Crews, Omaha
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JH: James Haver, Gothenburg
JHo: Julie Holly, Dorchester
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L&BP: Loren & Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LD: Linda Deeds, North Platte
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LF: Larry Falk, Nebraska City
LO: Linda Ollinger, Wilsonville
LR: Lanny Randolph, Minden
LRB: Linda R. Brown, Lincoln
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MBe: Mark Bernt, North Platte
MH: Matt Hansen, Fairbury
MHo: Mike Holcomb, Broken Bow
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
NA: Noah Arthur, Lincoln
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings
PMH: Peter M. Hill, Rushville

PR: Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA
RD: Roger Dietrich, Yankton, SD
RH: Robin Harding, Minden
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSg: Ruben Siegfried, Gering
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
ScS: Scott Schmidt, Blair
SH: Steve Hansen, Raymond
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA
SK: Stacey Kruger, Long Pine
SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SSc: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
StS: Scott Schroeder, Napavine, WA
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TF: Tessa Fiore, Bellevue
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TZ: Teri Zambon, Rockport, TX
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
VK: Valerie Keenan, Alliance
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: Sightings are fewest early Jan through mid-Feb; up to 5 were wintering at CL (JR, LE); apparent spring arrivals there were 12 on 26 Feb (JR). Elsewhere, 1-6 were reported during the same period in Hamilton (LR, RH), Franklin (LR, RH), and Lancaster (LE) Cos. Best count was 113 in Lancaster Co 23 Feb (LE).

Snow Goose: The only significant number reported during the first half of Jan was 28-34 blue morph birds at CL 2 (one white morph present on this date) and 11 Jan (EB, JR). The last big groups in fall were the 22,444 reported on the HCR CBC 16 Dec (fide JGJ) and 1700 at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 28 Dec (BD). Likely early arrivals were the 7000 flying down river at ICSP 22 Jan, probably based at Squaw Creek NWR, Missouri, (LF, SQ), 700 in Buffalo Co the same day (TJW), and 250 at RS 23 Jan (RSt). Reports from the Superior area of 150 on 31 Jan and 400 on 7 Feb (DE) were likely birds from Lovewell Res in Kansas, where the wintering flock was known to forage into southern Nebraska (HA).

Ross's Goose: The only mid-winter report was of one at CL 3 and 11 Jan (GR, JR), possibly the same bird that was there last Jan at the same time. The 1000 in

Sarpy Co 14 Feb (TF) was a good tally of migrants; high spring counts are 2000-5600.

Brant: A report by a knowledgeable observer of 13 with "thousands" of Canada Geese in Dodge Co 20 Feb (BF, fide KH), but not later the same day (D&JP), as well as 3 in the same place 23 Feb (SH, fide JGJ) will be referred to NOURC. All of the previous 14 documented reports involved single birds.

Cackling Goose: Mid-winter (mid-Jan through early Feb) sightings are expected in the central and west, but are uncommon or rare in the east. The only over-wintering reported in the east was at CL, where up to 10 were present through the period (BP, JR, m. ob.), and up to 22 were at Fremont Lakes SRA, Dodge Co, 2-19 Jan (GR). As many as 8 may have wintered at L Yankton, Cedar Co, (DT, TG), but the 115 in Lancaster Co 3 Feb (LE) were likely early migrants. First big group for spring was the 2500 in Dawson Co 13 Feb (JH).

Canada Goose: Best tally reported was the 20,000 at Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co, 20 Feb (AW); at that date, many or most would be staging migrants. High spring counts are in the 100,000 range.

Mute Swan: Adding to the growing case for adding this species to the state's Official List was the presence on 6 Feb at Crystal L, Blair, of a free-flying family group of 6, declining to 5 on 14 Feb (CP); the observer was aware of the possibility of Trumpeter Swans, but the orange bills of the 2 ads were clearly seen, as were the dark bills and "dirty" look of the juvs. An imm in western Douglas Co 12 Dec may have been the same bird that was there a month prior (JR).

Trumpeter Swan: CL seems to have become a winter magnet for this species; mid-winter counts there ranged from 30 to 55 (JR, m. ob.), apparently mostly ads (MW). Other wintering groups were at LO, a regular site, where up to 36 were reported on 27 Dec (SJD, m. ob.), and DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, where up to 19 were present 3-11 Jan (BP, GR). Elsewhere the usual single-digit numbers were reported statewide (m. ob.).

Tundra Swan: This species generally departs by mid-Dec, but there are several records of over-wintering and several mid-winter records, often in mixed groups with the now-ubiquitous Trumpeters, and it is still less-than-annual. This winter, as many as 6 were reported at CL (JR, ARy, m. ob.), with at least one ad and one imm present continuously (JR). There were up to 7 at LO 26 Dec-1 Feb (SJD, MW, NA), 3 of which were the first LM CBC record (SJD), an ad there 26 Feb (SJD), and a probable late migrant during count week on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (TJW).

Wood Duck: Still rare in the west in midwinter, 1-2 in Scotts Bluff Co 14 Feb (KD, SMa) were a good find, while Pier Park, Grand Island, continues to be a winter magnet for Wood Ducks, with 20 there 9 Feb (SM).

Gadwall: This species over-winters statewide from the Platte River Valley counties southward in small numbers, more so in recent winters; best counts were 16 at Scottsbluff SL 23 Jan, increasing to 27 on 13 Feb (KD), and 15 at the usually unfrozen Salt Creek, Lincoln, 6 Feb (LE).

American Wigeon: This is a rare wintering bird, albeit sometimes in good numbers; most reports are from the North Platte River Valley. By far the best tally was the 45 at Scottsbluff SL 23 Jan (KD), increasing with arrival of migrants to 96 on 13 Feb (KD). The only mid-winter reports (10 Jan-5 Feb for this species) from the east were of 2 at HL 31 Jan (JW) and one at CL 2 Feb (EA).

American Black Duck: The Fall Report mentioned a possible sighting at Bowley's Pond, North Platte, 15 Nov (NA); the sighting appears to indeed have been of this species, as 2 were on the same pond for the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (TJW). There are only 3 fall Panhandle records and now 4 additional westerly records.

Mallard: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide fall migrant.

Blue-winged Teal: Two in Dodge Co 6 Dec (KSh, photo) were about the 8th-latest on record. Most leave by early Nov.

Cinnamon Teal: None were reported of this uncommon western fall migrant.

Northern Shoveler: Generally rare in mid-winter, reports were from locations favored by other waterfowl this winter: CL hosted up to 15 (JR, m. ob.), Salt Creek, Lincoln, had one on 6 Feb (LE), and Scottsbluff SL had 10 on 23 Jan (KD). In addition, single date mid-winter reports were of 6 at L Yankton, Cedar Co, 28 Jan (DT) and one at North Platte 31 Jan (BP).

Northern Pintail: Reports of small numbers were widespread from the Platte River Valley southward, as expected (m. ob.). A hybrid with Mallard was near Sutherland Res 26 Dec (SJD).

Green-winged Teal: Winter visitors are distributed much like Northern Pintail; best count was the 32 on Salt Creek, Lincoln, 6 Feb (LE).

Canvasback: A few winter where water conditions allow; this winter "small numbers" wintered in Lancaster Co (LE, TG), one was at LO, a favored location, 15 and 22 Jan (SMa, RSt), one wintered at CL (ARy, m. ob.), one was at Burchard L SRA, Pawnee Co, 15 Jan (SQ), and one was at Scottsbluff SL 23 Jan (KD).

Redhead: As with Canvasback, a few were reported in mid-winter at the same locations: as many as 25 wintered at CL (JR, m. ob.), one was at LO 15 Jan (SM), 24 were at Scottsbluff SL 23 Jan (KD), and one was at PP 27 Jan (LE). First spring arrivals appear in early Feb; 45 were at CL 6 Feb (JR).

Ring-necked Duck: This species occurs much like the previous two; mid-winter reports (17 Jan-3 Feb for this species) were of up to 50 at CL 8-26 Jan (MW, JR, SMa, m. ob.) and 29 at Scottsbluff SL 23 Jan (KD). One was at LO 30 Jan (BP). Fifty had arrived at CL by 6 Feb (JR) and 115 were at Scottsbluff SL by 15 Feb (KD).

Greater Scaup: There were 6 reports, all but 2 of fall migrants at LO; last there was one 15 Jan (SM) possibly attempting to winter, and best counts were the 20 there 26 Dec (MW) and the 72 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD). Elsewhere, one was on the Norfolk CBC 20 Dec (fide DH, TJW). Spring migrants were the 29 at LO 26 Feb (SJD).

Lesser Scaup: Mid-winter occurrence timing is virtually the same as for Ring-necked Duck; reports were from CL, where up to 5 wintered (RSt, m. ob.), Scottsbluff SL, where up to 7 wintered (KD), and PP, where a single bird wintered (LE).

Surf Scoter: None were reported of this rare statewide fall migrant; most depart by mid-Dec however.

White-winged Scoter: The only report was of an imm at LO 6 Dec (MW, photo); most depart by mid-Dec.

Black Scoter: None were reported of this rare statewide fall migrant; most depart by mid-Dec.

Long-tailed Duck: None were reported of this rare statewide winter visitor; while most are seen in fall (although there was only one report for Fall 2014), this species is more apt to winter on LO than are the scoters.

Bufflehead: The only mid-winter reports were from LO, the only regular wintering location, where up to 12 were present 15-30 Jan (BP, RSt, SM, AF): this is the least likely of common diving ducks to overwinter in the state. The 500 at LO 6 Dec (MW) and 310 there 27 Dec (SJD) were good counts; highs for fall are 1200-1394.

Common Goldeneye: There were numerous mid-winter reports, as expected. Best count for the period was the amazing 1875 spring arrivals at BOL 17 Feb (LE); previous spring high count was 200.

Barrow's Goldeneye: Past reports of this species are from opposite ends of the state, reflecting different sources of breeding populations: Rocky Mountains and northern forests. An imm male was at Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co, 10 Jan (JGJ), and a possible fem at CL 24 Jan was not well seen but had a half-yellow bill (EB). Interestingly, most of the few spring records are from the east, and most of the fall records are from the west.

Hooded Merganser: As many as 10 wintered at CL (SMa, SQ, JR, m. ob.) for the third consecutive year; the only other mid-winter reports were of a male at PP 30 Jan (LE) and a single at North Platte 31 Jan (BP). An oft-reported hybrid, Hooded Merganser x Common Goldeneye, was at BOL 10 Feb (NA). This is the 11th Nebraska report of this hybrid, but possibly only 4 individuals may have been involved.

Common Merganser: Reports were routine of this locally common statewide winter visitor.

Red-breasted Merganser: Small numbers can usually be detected amongst the large Common Merganser flocks that winter (Jan-early Feb for this species) at certain major reservoirs; the only reports this winter were of single birds at Sutherland Res 10 and 24 Jan (JGJ, TEL). Migrants arrive at LO by 26 Feb, with 12 present (SJD).

Ruddy Duck: This species is rare in mid-winter; the two reports this winter are only the 14th and 15th such records: singles at CL 24 Jan (SQ) and LO 30 Jan (BP).

Northern Bobwhite: North of the Platte River Valley this species declines in numbers westward and is rare in the northern Panhandle; fair numbers were reported at a few locations in Custer Co during the winter, where the 5 reports totaled 22 birds (TH).

Gray Partridge: None were reported of this uncommon northeastern resident.

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine of this locally common northern and western resident.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: The 92 on a Lincoln Co loop 9 Dec was a good tally; 4 flocks of 10, 12, 20, and 50 (TJW). Highs are 117-174.

Wild Turkey: This species is abundant in the cedar canyons of southeastern Lincoln Co; single-location counts of 300 on 15 Feb (LD) and 200 on 2 Jan (SMa) are "not unusual here in the canyon during winter" (LD).

Common Loon: The only report was of one on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD).

Pied-billed Grebe: Last dates are in mid-Dec, except at LO, where wintering attempts occur most years; one was there through 30 Dec (MW, SJD), possibly the same bird that was below Keystone Dam 22 Jan (RSt). Also tardy was one at Sutherland Res 29 Dec (PR).

Horned Grebe: Last reported was a straggler at LM 27 Dec (fide SJD); most depart by early Dec but at LM there are reports into early Jan.

Red-necked Grebe: The only report was of one at LO 20-21 Dec (MW). This species has become a regular late fall visitor to LM and LO in recent years.

Eared Grebe: The only report for the period was a tardy single at LO 6 Dec (MW); last dates are 17-19 Dec.

Western Grebe: Most depart by Dec, except at LM, where a few linger into Jan most years; 30 were there 20 Dec (MW), and 39 were recorded on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD). One on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW) provided the latest fall date on record away from LM and Sutherland Res.

Clark's Grebe: One on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD) was at the only site at which the species has overwintered, usually along with numbers of Western Grebes.

Double-crested Cormorant: Wintering is rare for this species, but perhaps unsurprising was the presence of up to 26 with the pelicans at Sutherland Res through the winter (SJD, m. ob.); only 3 were still there by 26 Feb (SJD). This is only the 2nd documented record of overwintering, although there are a few other mid-winter single-date records from Sutherland Res. Tardy were 7 on the Harlan Co CBC 16 Dec (JGJ).

American White Pelican: As many as 24 wintered at the "hot pool" at Sutherland Res (SMa, m. ob.), although only 11 were still present by 15 Feb (TJW, AW) and 6 by 26 Feb (SJD). Spring arrival is generally by late Feb, but HCR welcomes the first migrants; 50 had arrived by 15 Feb (JGJ).

Brown Pelican: A major surprise was the presence 26 Dec-26 Feb of an ad at the Sutherland Res cooling pond with wintering American White Pelicans (SJD, m.ob.). Not surprisingly, this is the first winter record for Nebraska; previous latest date of the 8 prior documented records was 23 Oct. Subspecies identification is tricky, but some observers identified the bird as of Atlantic origin (TJW, MW), the expected form of Great Plains stragglers.

Great Blue Heron: Adding to the eclectic group of atypical wintering water-birds at Sutherland Res were the 15 Great Blues there 2 Jan (SMa). This species can occur anywhere in the state in mid-winter, but usually only singles are seen.

Bald Eagle: HCR was the center for this species this winter; 316 were counted on a scan from the dam 30 Jan (PD), the highest winter tally on record by 32.

Northern Harrier: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Northern Goshawk: A typical winter for this species saw 3 reports: one helped county listers by being seen in both Knox and Cedar Cos 1 Jan (DT, MB, TZ photo), one was in cedar canyons in Lincoln Co 3 Jan (TJW), and one was in Hall Co 15 Feb (SM).

Red-shouldered Hawk: None were reported of this rare southeastern winter visitor.

Red-tailed Hawk: An interesting concentration of "Western" Red-tailed Hawks was noted in Washington and Burt Cos 6 Dec; most of the 48 Red-tails seen were ad western *Buteo jamaicensis calurus* (JT).

Ferruginous Hawk: The only easterly report was of one in Franklin Co 25 Jan (LR, RH).

Rough-legged Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide winter visitor.

Golden Eagle: Ads are rare in the east; one was in Lancaster Co 30 Jan (LE), and another was in Otoe Co 5 Dec (SQ, LF, details).

Virginia Rail: The only report was of one on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD); this is a regular late fall and possibly wintering site.

American Coot: The 3201 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD) was an excellent late Dec count. Wintering is regular there, as well as at Scottsbluff SL, where 144 were present 23 Jan (KD), and, recently, at CL, where peak count was 300 on 11 Jan (JR). Numbers at CL had declined to 20 by 24 Jan (SMa), followed by an influx of 150 on 6 Feb (JR).

Sandhill Crane: Early dates for this species are 23-24 Jan, although such early arrivers often retreat southward when faced with bad weather conditions. This year, a single bird was standing on ice at North Platte SL 31 Jan (BP). Small groups began arriving at RS by 7 Feb (AP), "hundreds" were near Alda by 26 Feb (AF), and 3000 were at Lewellen the same day (JGJ). Easterly was one in Lancaster Co 10 Feb (LE).

Killdeer: The expected few birds were reported from favored North Platte River Valley sites, where wintering is essentially annual: one in Scotts Bluff Co 20 Dec (KD), 3 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (SJD), one at Sutherland Res 1 Jan (SMa), and up to 3 in the North Platte area through the period (TJW). Earliest presumed arrival was one in Washington Co 13 Feb (ScS); early dates are 10-11 Feb away from known wintering areas.

Greater Yellowlegs: The only report was of one at RS Co 17 Jan (AF); this is the latest of the 4 records for Jan, all from the Platte River Valley.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Two were at RS 7 Dec (StS), only the second record for Dec, the other in Dodge Co 13-14 Dec 2001 (D&JP).

Wilson's Snipe: Wintering birds are found in the same North Platte River Valley places as Killdeer; 14 were on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD), and up to 7 wintered in the North Platte area (TJW). A bit more surprising was one on the Ames CBC 18 Dec (fide D&JP).

Bonaparte's Gull: The only reports were of 25 at LO 6 Dec (MW) and 30 at HCR 13 Dec (JGJ); last dates are 20-24 Dec.

Franklin's Gull: There are almost 30 mid-winter records of this species, surprising in that it winters in South America. An alternate-plumaged ad was at BOL 28 Jan (LE).

Mew Gull: Only the 15th spring record and 34th overall was an ad at Alma SL 15 Feb (JGJ).

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine for this abundant statewide fall migrant and uncommon winter visitor.

California Gull: Reports from LM and Sutherland Res are expected. Up to 4 were at LM through 30 Dec (MW, fide SJD) and one was there 26 Feb (SJD); 2-3 were at Sutherland Res 2 Jan (TJW) and 24 Feb (LR, RH). Reports from the east are rare, with these only the 15th and 16th fall reports there: BOL hosted up to 3 from 10-14 Dec (LE, TEL) including a first CBC record for Seward-Branched Oak L (fide JG), as well as an ad 17 Feb (NA), and an ad was at Twin Lakes WMA, Seward Co, 27 Jan (LE).

Herring Gull: The 790 on the HCR CBC 16 Dec (fide JGJ) was a new fall high tally; previous highs were 416-540. Somewhat surprisingly, the two highest counts on record are in mid-winter, 1000 and 1500 at LM.

Thayer's Gull: A minimum of 9 individuals was reported from 5 locations: 2-3 ads were at LO through the period (MW, SJD, m. ob.) and imms were there 1 Feb (NA) and 26 Feb (SJD). An imm that appeared at GPD 28 Nov remained until 7 Dec (DT, TZ), BOL hosted an imm 10-20 Feb (NA, m. ob.), and 1-2 imms were at HCR 13 Dec-30 Jan (JGJ, PD). As observers are scrutinizing gulls in more detail and camera quality is improving, gulls that are difficult to identify are becoming apparent. Some are best left as unidentifiable, such as the adult Thayer's/Kumlien's bird at GPD in late fall (MW, see Fall Report), another such intermediate at LO 10 Jan (JGJ), as well as an odd imm at BOL 21 Feb that resembled hybrids seen by the observer on the West Coast (NA).

Iceland (Kumlien's) Gull: There were two reports: an imm at Sutherland Res 28 Dec (EB) and an imm at HCR 9 Feb (KS photo). These are the 29th and 30th records for the state.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: This species is primarily a regular migrant through Nebraska, but there are about 9 records for Jan that could be considered wintering, including these this winter: an ad at LO 22 Jan-15 Feb (RSt, m. ob.) was likely a lingerer from the group of 3 there 20 Dec (MW), and a first year was at HCR 30 Jan (PD). Likely fall migrants were an ad at BOL 3 Dec, first seen there 22 Nov (LE), and up to 4 at HCR 13-16 Dec (JGJ). Likely spring migrants were an ad at BOL 3-16 Feb (LE, m. ob.), one at HCR 8 Feb (LR, RH), 4 at LO 26-27 Feb (SJD, JGJ, BP), and one in Lincoln Co 26 Feb (SJD). Overall for the period the tally appears to be an impressive 17 individuals.

Glaucous Gull: A minimum of 12 birds was reported statewide (m. ob.); this is better than the usual tally for this winter visitor. Best count was the 3 juvs at LO 26 Feb (SJD).

Great Black-backed Gull: Two were reported, both first cycle birds: one at BOL 12-17 Feb (NA, m. ob.) and the other at LO 26-27 Feb (SJD, JGJ, BP). There are now about 30 records of this species for the state; sightings have increased in recent years.

Rock Pigeon: Best non-CBC count received was 355 at the Lincoln Co Courthouse 21 Dec (TJW), although the Lincoln CBC 20 Dec reported 2693 (fide LRB).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: A new record count was the 670 on the Scottsbluff CBC 20 Dec (fide AK). Nesting activities were underway at Ogallala 30 Jan with courting taking place and nest material being gathered (JO); this is the earliest date to hand for such activity by this species.

White-winged Dove: There are about 14 reports mid-Oct through mid-Mar, only one involving overwintering; thus the 2nd is of 3 birds in a Gering yard 20 Dec, declining to one by 26 Jan, which remained through Feb (RSg). Another which may have wintered was "still hanging around at feeders" in Boone 13 Feb (DMK).

Mourning Dove: This species winters in low numbers in the south and east; mid-winter reports this year were from Chase Co eastward through Buffalo and Hall Cos to Lancaster Co and north through Madison Co to Cedar Co. Outside this area it is rare from Dec until mid-Feb, when 3 were in Scottsbluff 14 Feb (RSg), 3 were in Box Butte Co the same day (VK), and 2-4 were in Blaine Co 14-15 Feb (BHG). Last reported in fall were 10 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD) and 10 on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (TJW).

Eastern Screech-Owl: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine for this common statewide resident.

Snowy Owl: A normal winter showing had 5 reports: one in Buffalo Co 3-6 Dec (KS, AF, MW), one in western Custer Co 11 Dec (fide TJW), one in northern Saunders Co whose photo appeared on Facebook 3 Jan (AS fide AF), one in Dodge Co 21 Feb (BF fide D&JP), and one in Dawson Co 10 (KPe, no details).

Barred Owl: Reports continue from the Fairbury area as this species slowly moves westward; one was northwest of Fairbury 28 Jan (MH). The west extent of the range in the Platte River Valley is in Nance and Merrick Cos; it has been present about 10 miles east of Palmer the "last couple years" (CL, fide JGJ).

Long-eared Owl: Best tally of wintering birds was of 11 at Cunningham L, Omaha, 18-24 Jan (SMa).

Short-eared Owl: Reports were routine for this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Our knowledge of this species' status in Nebraska is evolving on a couple of fascinating fronts. Following his remarkable discovery of breeding Saw-whets in southern Scotts Bluff Co in 2014, Wayne Mollhoff reports that as of 12 Feb a box in Dawes Co contained an incubating fem and 4 eggs. On 22 Feb there were 6 eggs, and on 3 Apr 6 young were banded. Mollhoff estimates that the eggs were laid around 5-6 Feb, some 6 weeks earlier than the 2014 Scotts Bluff Co birds and record-early for the species by about 2 weeks ("Birds of North America Online"). Calling birds continue to be heard around Feb-early Mar in cedar canyons in southeastern Lincoln Co; this spring one was heard 15 Feb (LD). The well-known wintering birds in Ida Co, Iowa, begin calling in late Feb prior to departure (DP), and so calling by the birds in Lincoln Co may not necessarily be indicative of territorial breeders.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide resident and winter visitor.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Reports were concentrated in the southeast as expected, with outliers in Madison Co, one on 13 Feb (JB), and Saline Co, 2 on 15 Feb (JHo). FF and ICSP hold most wintering Red-headeds, with 58 on the Omaha CBC 20 Dec (fide BG) and 10-13 at ICSP 18-22 Jan (RSt, SQ, LF).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Reports were routine for this common statewide, rare Panhandle, resident.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: In recent years this species is increasingly occurring westward in winter. There were about 9 reports west of Buffalo Co to Hitchcock (JGJ) and Keith (J&GB, fide SJD) Cos, but none in the Panhandle; northernmost were a juv present in Burwell for a while through 11 Jan (B&KG), an imm in Loup Co 6 Feb (WF), and one in Custer Co 14 Feb (TH). The latter 2 records are only the 4th and 5th for the north for Feb through mid-Mar.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: The fem of the black-shouldered Rocky Mountain subspecies continued in a Scotts Bluff Co yard, with sightings 1 Jan and 7 Feb (KD).

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident and winter visitor.

Pileated Woodpecker: Sightings of single birds continued at Flathead WMA, Jefferson Co, with one there 18 Jan (TEL). One at Schilling WMA, Cass Co, was at a new, but not unexpected site (CNK). Evidence of bark chipping and removal typical of this species was noted in Saunders Co along the Platte River 14 Dec (JT). Young birds probably wander in fall, enabling the species to gradually expand its range.

American Kestrel: Reports were routine of this uncommon southern, rare northern, statewide winter visitor.

Merlin: Most winter reports are of the prairie subspecies *Falco columbarius richardsonii;* one was in Dakota Co 22 Dec (BFH). Surprising, however, were the 3 reports of *F. c. columbarius,* which usually winters south of Nebraska: singles were in Knox Co 1 Jan (MB), Douglas Co 6 Feb (JR), and Douglas Co 9 Feb (SMa).

Peregrine Falcon: The breeding pairs in Omaha and Lincoln are sedentary (BFi fide RS) but are known to forage up to 35 miles from their respective home bases (fide RS); one of the Omaha birds was seen in western Iowa on the Omaha CBC 20 Dec (fide RS).

Prairie Falcon: There was a big push eastward this winter, where this species is rare, with no fewer than 9 eastern reports through the period (m. ob.).

Loggerhead Shrike: One in Franklin Co 15 Feb (JGJ) was on the early side; early dates (except for the west) are 8-9 Feb. No others were reported.

Northern Shrike: Numbers are highest in the north and west, as reflected by the count of 12 in southeastern Lincoln Co cedar canyons 3 Jan (TJW). Southernmost was one in Furnas Co 15 Feb (JGJ).

Pinyon Jay: None were reported of this uncommon Panhandle resident and winter visitor.

Blue Jay: The 350 on the Lincoln CBC 20 Dec (fide LRB) was a good CBC tally.

Black-billed Magpie: This species is in some trouble, as local populations are barely hanging on; even in Scotts Bluff Co, magpies are "harder and harder to find" (AK). Observers should report the status of their local populations to NEBirds, eBird, or to me at silcock@rosssilcock.com. In order to summarize current status, following is a list of best counts from the locations that reported magpies this winter; I assume this is not complete, so additional locations and higher counts are welcome. **Scotts Bluff Co areas:** 6 at SBNM (MW), 4 at Winters Creek Ranch (AD), one at WHNC (MW), 6 at various Scotts Bluff Co locations (KD). **LM area:** 24 on LM CBC (fide SJD), 4 along canal east of Keystone Rd (SMa). **HCR area:** 7 near Alma (KS), 3 on HCR CBC (fide JGJ). Previous CBCs here averaged 25/year (JGJ). **Crofton, Cedar Co:** 3 in "usual spot", Roads 553 and 898 (RD, DT, TZ). **Lincoln Co:** 2 on North Platte CBC at Johnson Rd and Highway 97 (TJW). **Sheridan Co:** 5 on White Clay Creek Rd and Beaver Creek Rd (MW). **Dawes Co:** one on Bordeaux-Table Rd loop (MW), **Deuel Co**: 3 (JGJ). **Norfolk:** one of the "remnant population" counted on CBC (DH). **Franklin Co:** one (JGJ).

American Crow: Best counts were an impressive 4500 at Jeffrey Res, Lincoln Co, 19 Jan (TJW), followed by a mere 2337 on the Calamus-Loup CBC 2 Jan (fide DH) and 2000 in two flocks 1/8 mile apart along I-80 in Lincoln Co 23 Jan (RSt). Highest counts (around 100,000) occur when a winter roost is present in the state.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this common statewide winter visitor.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Mountain Chickadee: This species has appeared each winter in recent years, although reports are only from Scotts Bluff Co. This year at least 3, all singles, were reported: one first seen in late Oct at Winters Creek Ranch was still present 14 Feb (AD), one was in the DeLara yard near Mitchell at least 8-22 Feb (KD, SMa), and one was near the airport 21 Dec (MW).

Tufted Titmouse: Reports were routine for this common southeastern resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Small numbers were reported statewide for a typical winter showing; best CBC tally was 16, at North Platte 21 Dec, 11 of which were at the North Platte Cem (TJW). The count of 16 tied the high winter count for the state.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this common northern and eastern resident, fairly common winter visitor elsewhere.

Pygmy Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this fairly common northwestern resident.

Brown Creeper: The counts of 6 at the North Platte Cem 21 Dec (TJW) and 6 at LO 27 Dec (SJD) tied the state high winter count.

Winter Wren: There were a few reports from the southeast in Dec as expected, but few overwinter; Feb reports are scarce, with none this winter. The only Jan reports were of singles in Dodge Co 2 Jan (GR) and at FF 17 Jan (JCr), a likely wintering attempt there. One was westerly at LO 26-27 Dec (SJD).

Marsh Wren: Reports were from the North Platte River Valley as expected; one was on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW), 2 were on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD), and one was at Winters Creek Ranch, Scotts Bluff Co, 14 Feb (AD). All were likely wintering.

Carolina Wren: The only reports north or west of Douglas and Lancaster Cos were of one in Butler Co 22 Dec (CD), separate singles near Fremont 18 Dec (GR) and 1-18 Dec (KSh), one westerly at Fairmont 3 Feb (JRi), 2 more westerly on the Grand Island CBC 13 Dec (RH), and one in Jefferson Co 18 Jan (TEL).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Most wintering is in the southeast with few Jan-Feb records elsewhere; the only such report was of one in Custer Co 14 Feb (TH) and a surprising 12 in Lincoln Co 15 Feb (TJW). Two on the Crawford CBC 27 Dec (MW) were unexpected at that date, as was one in Scotts Bluff Co 21 Dec (MW); none were found on the Scottsbluff CBC 20 Dec (fide AK). The LM and North Platte CBCs reported 20 and 8 respectively (fide SJD, TJW).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: A few attempt to overwinter in the south and east, but few make it into Feb; exceptions were one in a Fremont yard 14-27 Feb (GR), another in Omaha 16 Feb (SMa), and a westerly but southerly bird in Wilsonville 12-16 Feb (PD, JGJ). There were no Jan reports.

Eastern Bluebird: This species is another that withdraws from most of the state except the southeast and North Platte River Valley in winter. The only reports away from the southeast were of one in Custer Co 24 Feb (WF), 11 on the LM

CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD), up to 22 during the period in the Lincoln Co cedar canyons (TJW, RSt, BP), and 6 on the Grand Island CBC 13 Dec (fide RH).

Mountain Bluebird: This species arrives on its Panhandle breeding grounds by late Feb; 1-2 were at WHNC 14-15 Feb (SMa, RSg, KD). Presumed migrants were the 8 in Custer Co 24 Feb (WF), and, fitting the picture nicely, last to leave Lincoln Co wintering areas were 8 on 16 Feb (TJW). It is tempting to deduce that Panhandle breeders winter in Lincoln Co, perhaps the only altitudinal migration in Nebraska. Strangely, despite a peak count of 51 in Lincoln Co 3 Jan, none were reported on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec, a "notable miss" (TJW). The 5 on the HCR CBC 16 Dec were a count first there (fide JGJ) and presumably the same 5 were at the Alma SL 21 Dec (BN, photo).

Townsend's Solitaire: This was a down year for this species, with only 15 on CBCs, 11 of those at LM 27 Dec (fide SJD), none (a "notable miss", TJW) on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW), and only one (!) on the Scottsbluff CBC 20 Dec (fide AK). Unexpectedly in such a down year, there were easterly reports: one was on the Seward-Branched Oak L CBC 14 Dec (fide JG), where the species occurs with some regularity and a high count of 7 in 2013, one was at PL 3 Feb (LE), and one was in Knox Co 1 Jan, only the veteran observer's 2nd or 3rd there (MB).

Hermit Thrush: A few attempt to winter in the southeast, such as singles at PRSP 3 Jan (JGJ) and in Merrick Co 7 Feb (JGJ), but winter reports elsewhere are rare. There were a surprising two this winter: one at Grove L SRA, Antelope Co, 15 Jan (JJ) and 2 in Dundy Co 13 Feb (PD).

American Robin: Best count received was the 1000 in Brown Co 14 Jan (SK); high winter counts are 10,000+, most in cedars in north-central Nebraska.

Gray Catbird: Only the 9th record for Jan-Feb was one at Bellevue 30 Jan (L&BP). Overwintering has not been documented.

Northern Mockingbird: This species may attempt to overwinter; there are two such prior records, but survival past mid-Jan is rare. This winter's attempts were of one at BOL 14 Dec-13 Jan (RSt, LE) and one in Johnson Co 15 Jan (SQ).

Brown Thrasher: Jan-Feb reports are few away from the southeast, and are likely birds attempting to overwinter; thus one on the Calamus-Loup CBC 2 Jan (fide DH) was unexpected, as was one at Fairmont 3 Feb (JRi).

European Starling: Reports were routine of this common statewide winter visitor.

Bohemian Waxwing: None were reported of this erratic but regular winter visitor mostly in the northwest.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this common statewide winter visitor.

Lapland Longspur: Reports were routine of this common statewide winter visitor.

Snow Bunting: Fewer than 40 were reported, at 5 locations, a typical year. Best counts were 16 in Cheyenne Co 23 Feb (EH) and 12 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD). Elsewhere, 1-3 were at BOL 13 Dec-28 Jan (MW, m. ob.), 1-2 were in Cedar Co 1-2 Jan (TZ, DT), and 4-5 were at the HCR dam 30 Jan-8 Feb (PD, LR, RH).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: This species is fairly common over much of the state into Dec, but by Jan most have departed and the very few remaining are in the southeast. Even in the southeast Feb records are rare. This winter, however, there were multiple reports from several locations through the winter, quite likely an unprecedented event given warmer winters in recent years. Jan-Feb records were from most of the counties south and east of, and including, Harlan, Hall, Merrick, Polk, and Saunders. As might be expected, with so many present in mid- and late winter, there were several Feb reports. Prior to this winter, there were only 20 statewide records for Feb; this winter added no fewer than 16, most in counties outlined above, but also including the following: 5 in Custer Co 14 Feb (TH), one at LO 15 Feb (SMa), and 6 in Dundy Co 13 Feb (PD). Of interest was an apparent intergrade at LO 15 Feb that looked like an Audubon's Warbler but called like a Myrtle (SMa).

Spotted Towhee: A few linger in the south through winter; Feb reports were of singles at Schramm Park SRA, Sarpy Co, 7 Feb (SQ), Franklin Co 15 Feb (JGJ), and FF 24 Feb (EB). A bit westerly for the date was one on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW).

American Tree Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide winter visitor.

Chipping Sparrow: The only report was of 2 stragglers at a feeder on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW). Typically, late dates for Chipping Sparrow are of 1-2 birds at a feeder.

Field Sparrow: Most have left the state by mid-Nov, but there are a number of Dec records in the south. This fall, 2 were in Otoe Co 10 Dec (SQ) and one was on the LM CBC 27 Dec (WRS, fide SJD), the second record for the LM CBC.

Fox Sparrow: As has been the case beginning with winter 2009-2010, this species was reported through the winter in the southeast, with at least 16 individuals at 11 locations (m. ob.). Outliers were one at Pressey WMA, Custer Co, 14 Feb (TH, details suggest *Passerella iliaca iliaca*) and 3 in Franklin Co 15 Feb (JGJ).

Song Sparrow: Wintering birds are generally rare north of the Platte and North Platte River Valleys and away from the east. Thus of interest were one in Dawes Co 27 Dec (MW) and 1-3 at 3 Custer Co locations 6-14 Feb (TH).

Lincoln's Sparrow: The last two winters saw several Lincoln's Sparrows lingering through Dec and into Jan in the southeast, but there were no Feb reports in either winter. This winter, the scenario was similar, but two did linger into Feb, only the 5th and 6th Feb records for the state: singles at Ashland 3-4 Feb (WM), and in Lincoln Co 15 Feb (TJW).

Swamp Sparrow: Although wintering occurs in the southeast on occasion (less than annually), there were few reports of stragglers this year. The only Feb record was of 3 at Boyer Chute NWR 7-9 Feb (SMa, JR).

White-throated Sparrow: This species is a rare regular winter visitor in the southeast; there were multiple reports of low numbers through the winter from there, best count the 33 in Omaha 11 Feb (KGo). Elsewhere it is rare, even in the Platte Valley, although one was on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW), two on the Harlan County CBC 16 Dec (fide JGJ), and one on the Grand Island CBC 13 Dec (fide RH). Outliers were 2 in a rural Lincoln Co yard 4 Feb (VC) and 2 in Boone Co 14 Feb (DM). The Lincoln Co record is only the 3rd for Feb away from the southeast (outlined by Antelope, Boone, Howard, and Buffalo Cos).

Harris's Sparrow: Numbers were lower than usual; no non-CBC counts of more than 15 were reported, and high CBC was only 82, that at Harlan Co Res 16 Dec (fide JGJ). Rare westerly, one was in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 15 Jan (KD), 2 were in Hitchcock Co 20 Jan (TJW), 2-3 in Custer Co 13-14 Feb (TH), 4 on the LM CBC 27 Dec (fide SJD), and 3 on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW).

White-crowned Sparrow: This species winters in small numbers from the Platte River Valley southward, with by far highest overwintering numbers in the Panhandle. This winter, 254 were on the Scottsbluff CBC 20 Dec (fide AK), and up to 48 wintered in a Mitchell yard (KD). Best CBC count in the east was 33 at DeSoto NWR 3 Jan (fide JT) and non-CBC best was 10 at Boyer Chute NWR 9 Feb (JR). Outside the usual wintering area, mid-winter repots are rare; 2 were in Box Butte Co 14 Feb (VK), and 2-4 were at various locations in Custer Co 7-16 Feb (TH, MHo), only the 10th and 11th west of Boone Co and north of the Platte River Valley.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: This subspecies winters in the Panhandle, but is rare east of Keith Co; one was well-described in southeastern Lincoln Co 3 Jan (TJW). There were 6 reports from the expected winter range involving 34 birds, 18 of these in Sheridan Co 28 Dec (MW).

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: Best non-CBC count was 145 in Otoe Co 5 Dec (SQ); highs are 204-250.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: This subspecies is rare but regular in the east: CBC data for the 3 counts where they were reported (Lincoln, Seward-Branched Oak L, Harlan Co Res; there were several counts with none) showed 10 Oregons and 977 Slate-coloreds (about 1%), whereas Scottsbluff CBC showed 39 Oregons and 62 Slate-coloreds (39%).

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: This subspecies winters regularly east to Lincoln Co, where at least 23 were reported through the winter (TJW, MW, MBe, SMa). Observers reporting this subspecies in the east should attempt to document their sightings with photographs, as this subspecies is not well-documented there. One was reported in Nebraska City 1 Jan (SQ).

Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco: The only report was of one on the Scotts Bluff CBC 20 Dec (fide AK), the 15th record for Nebraska. In recent years there has been an increase in sightings of this subspecies in the west, but it is still less than annual.

Northern Cardinal: For the first time, 2 males appeared in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 3 Jan (KD); this species is very slowly establishing itself in the Panhandle. Singing began early, with one "singing up a storm" in Bellevue 30 Jan (CNK) and another singing in Ogallala (JO) the same day. Earliest singer on record was in Lincoln 13 Jan 2008 (JGJ).

Red-winged Blackbird: There were a large number of reports in mid-winter (Jan), virtually all from the Platte River Valley southward, a good showing; even Red-wings can be scarce in Jan. Best Jan count was a surprising 15,000 in Lincoln Co 9 Jan (TJW); 75,000 had arrived in Lincoln Co by 15 Feb (TJW).

Western Meadowlark: First singing reported was at BOL 9 Feb (TG); earliest on record is 12 Jan 2014 in Antelope Co (MB).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: The only report was of a straggler on the DeSoto NWR CBC 3 Jan (fide JT).

Rusty Blackbird: This species winters each year in varying numbers in the south and east, but is rare in the Panhandle. Two fems were in Scotts Bluff Co 12 Dec (KD), only the 13th Panhandle winter record, and almost in the Panhandle was one at LO 26-27 Dec (SJD). There were 10 reports from the south and east through the period, west to Frontier Co (LR, RH), involving a total of about 90 individuals (m. ob). Best counts were 33 on the HCR CBC 16 Dec (fide JGJ) and 20 in Hall Co 15 Feb (SM). Mid-Feb and later reports are likely spring migrants.

Brewer's Blackbird: Fall migrants were the 150 on the North Platte CBC 21 Dec (fide TJW), and, a bit late, one on the DeSoto NWR CBC 3 Jan (fide JT). Rather early spring migrants were 2 with a blackbird flock at BOL 12 Feb (LE). This species is not as cold-tolerant as some other blackbird species.

Common Grackle: Last good numbers reported were in mid-Dec: 182 on the Grand Island CBC (fide RH) and 26 on the Ames CBC 18 Dec (fide D&JP), and only scattered single-digit numbers were noted until mid-Feb, when there were 4 reports of migrants in groups of 17-300 (JH, KDi, LR, RH, JGJ). These migrants were about 2 weeks earlier than usual. Reports from late Dec-early Feb were from the Platte and North Platte River Valleys southward, except for 4 on the Calamus-Loup Res CBC 2 Jan (fide DH), and one on the Norfolk CBC 20 Dec (fide DH). Unexpected was a flock of 40 in Saunders Co 21 Jan (TG), possibly early migrants.

Great-tailed Grackle: Spring arrival and fall departure for this species resembles that of Common Grackle (late Dec and mid-Feb). Wintering Great-taileds, however, tend to be in large flocks rather than ones and twos like wintering Common Grackles. North Platte hosted a wintering flock of at least 125 (TJW); Great-taileds have wintered there sporadically since about 2010.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Cowbirds are rare in winter, with most departing before Dec; there were only 27 in all reported on CBCs this winter (fide D&JP). Mid-winter records are almost always with flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds or sometimes European Starlings, which themselves are rare in mid-winter. Notable mid-winter reports included these, all with Red-winged flocks: 28 in Dawson Co 10 Jan (LR, RH), 5 at Jeffrey Res 19 Jan (TJW), and 7 at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co, 30 Jan (BP).

Baltimore Oriole: One that was first noted at a feeder in Seward on the Seward-Branched Oak L CBC 14 Dec was photographed there 2 days later and reappeared 10 Jan (JG, photo). It was aged as a first fall individual (MW, JGJ, JR). This is the 10th record of this species lingering into Nov or later, but only the second surviving until Jan; latest was one in Cass Co 1986-1987 that survived until 14 Jan, when it was killed by a cat.

Brambling: Nebraska's third record was of a fem that attended a southeastern Lincoln Co cedar canyon feeder 14 Dec-31 Jan (LD, TJW, PD photo 16 Dec). It was with a Dark-eyed Junco flock of about 50 birds and absent for periods when the weather was suitable for the flock to forage elsewhere (LD). This species moves into the northwestern US from time to time in low-number "invasions"; this winter was one of those years, with scattered records east to Minnesota and Wisconsin (fide SMa).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: This species occurs every year in favored locations in the extreme northwest. The most reliable current location is SBNM, where up to 200 (31 Jan, BFH, MB, JR) were present at least 29-31 Jan (KD, m. ob.). The only other report was of "dozens" at Toadstool Geological Park, Sioux Co, 13 Dec and 9 Feb, roosting in Cliff Swallow nests (PMH), typical of this species in winter. One bird noted on 9 Feb was of the Hepburn's form (PMH), which breeds in Alaska and has been reported in Nebraska twice previously with large Gray-crowned flocks.

Immature Baltimore Oriole found in Seward during the Seward-Branched Oak CBC on 14 Dec 2014. Photographed here on 16 Dec 2014 by Eugene Brott.

Pine Grosbeak: A single sighting in a Furnas Co yard 11 Feb (LO) was tentatively identified from the observer's description as a "russet-headed" fem or a juv of this species (JGJ, JR). There have been a few scattered reports on the Great Plains this winter.

House Finch: Best count was 181 in the cedar canyons of southeastern Lincoln Co 3 Jan (TJW). An intriguing comment was made regarding a possible connection between a "huge" apple crop and a "huge" number of orange variant House Finches in Scotts Bluff Co 4 Dec (AD).

Purple Finch: This species occurs statewide, but is rare in the Panhandle; the only reports there were of a fem wintering at the same feeder one attended last winter (AD), and 3 in a Gering yard 22 Feb (RSg). Overall numbers were average for a Nebraska winter.

Cassin's Finch: Reports were all from Scotts Bluff Co; up to 20 (28 Feb, BP) were at WHNC from 17 Jan (5; KD) through the period (m. ob, photos), 2-30 wintered in a Wildcat Hills yard 10 Jan through the period (AK), and 3-6 were in a Gering yard 14-22 Feb (RSg). None were reported before 10 Jan; this species has a propensity to appear in mid-winter and increase in numbers in Feb-Mar.

Red Crossbill: Amazingly, the only report was of 17 in Lincoln Co 15 Feb (MBe).

Common Redpoll: There were several reports statewide of 1-4 birds, the only flocks reported were the 30 in Lancaster Co 18 Jan (JC, SSc) and 27 in Hitchcock Co 20 Jan (TJW). This was a typical non-invasion winter.

Pine Siskin: Reports were statewide in generally single-digit numbers except for large numbers at WHNC, where peak tally was 200 on 31 Jan (MW).

American Goldfinch: Best count was a single flock of 320 in Sheridan Co 28 Dec (MW); this is a new record high single-observer winter count.

Evening Grosbeak: There were 3 reports, earliest a pair in a southern Scotts Bluff Co yard 10 Jan that continued through at least 6 Feb, when they were joined by 2 more (AK). Elsewhere, 2 were in Hitchcock Co 13 Feb (PD) and up to15 were at WHNC 14 Feb (KD, SMa).

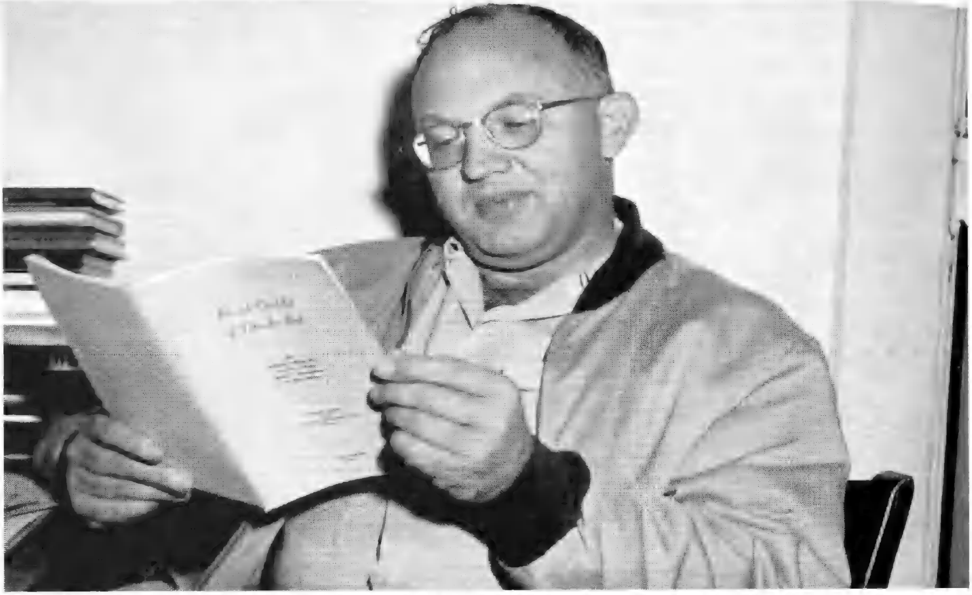
House Sparrow: Reports were routine of the common statewide resident.

In Memory of William F. Rapp, Jr.

Former NOU president and *Nebraska Bird Review* editor William F. Rapp, Jr., passed away on March 13, 2013, in Rochester, New York. Rapp was born in 1918 in Newark, New Jersey, and his interest in birds began during his junior high years. His parents encouraged his interest and arranged for him to spend a week at Cape May, New Jersey, after high school graduation, and in 1939 he was able to attend the annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union meeting at Harvard University.

He attended Rutgers University and graduated in 1944 with a degree in entomology and geology. He did postgraduate research at the University of Illinois in entomology and ecology. In 1947 he was offered a position on the faculty of Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, to teach various biology courses and ornithology for non-science students. He took his students on field trips around the state as his interest in birding continued. He had a banding permit and was elected to full membership in the American Ornithologists' Union in 1950.

His relationship with the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union dates from the first meeting he attended in 1947. By the next year, he was the editor of the Nebraska Bird Review, having been drafted for the job by then-president R. Allyn Moser after the previous editor, Edson Fichter, moved away from the state. Rapp recalls taking his first finished *Bird Review* to the printing company in Lincoln that had been publishing it. He handed it to the proprietor, only to have it handed right back with the terse comment, "You haven't paid for the last issue." He called NOU president Allyn Moser that evening to ask what to do. Moser said that he would "take care of it" and Rapp should take the manuscript back to the printers after a few days. It should be noted that the NOU treasurer's report of May 1, 1947, lists cash on hand as $257.41 (NBR, Vol 16, No. 1, page 59).



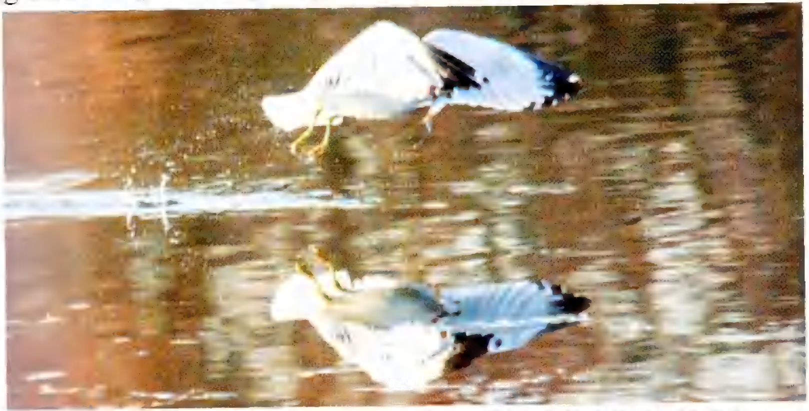
William Rapp in 1958. Photo courtesy of his daughter, Susan Beranek.

Rapp and wife Dr. Janet L. C. Rapp, also an NOU member, left Doane in 1952 so that Rapp could take a job with the Nebraska State Department of Health as a stream biologist and medical entomologist. Among his first projects was collecting blood samples from birds in an attempt to discover how the Western equine encephalitis virus cases that were showing up in western Nebraska was spread. Later he worked with mosquito control, tick surveys and public education programs. He eventually gave up the editor's job to Doris Gates in 1955, but he served as president for one year beginning in the spring of 1955.

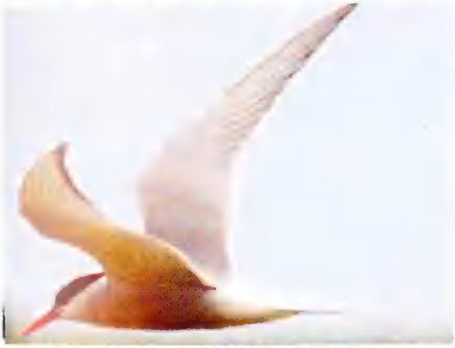
Rapp retired from the Nebraska State Department of Health in 1985, and wife Janet passed away in 1997. In 1999 he married Jean Vincent, whom he knew from his undergraduate days at Rutgers and moved to Pittsford, New York, in the Finger Lakes region. His interest in birds continued, and he also did studies on terrestrial isopods and the taxonomy of spiders. His last article published in the *Nebraska Bird Review*, on selected areas of bird study in Nebraska, was in December 2005.

Editor's note: Information for the above came from an obituary in the Rochester *Democrat & Chronicle* and from correspondence with Bill Rapp.

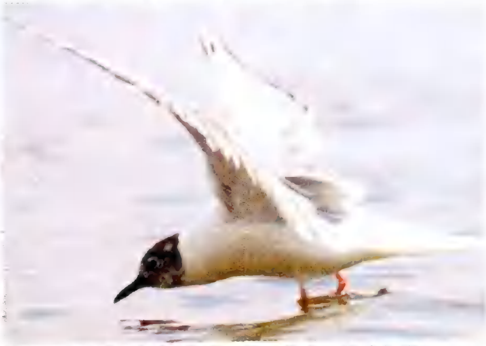
For our color photo section this year we asked especially for photos of birds in flight. The images we received show birds in flight for a variety of reasons: birds flying high, flying low, hunting for food, carrying food, feeding, taking off for flight or alighting, and fighting with another bird.



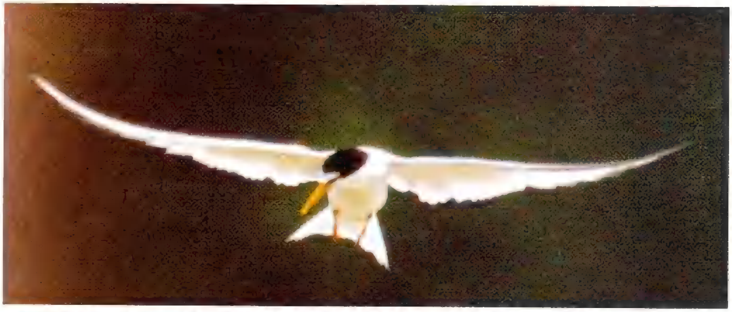
Above: Ring-billed Gull with fish, Fremont Lakes SRA, Dodge Co., 10 March 2015. Photo by Ken Shuster.



Arctic Tern, Marsh Duck WMA, York Co., 31 May 2015. If accepted by the NOU Records Committee, this will be only the 4th documented sighting in Nebraska. Photo by Joel Jorgensen.



Bonaparte's Gull, Lake Ogallala, Keith Co., 20 April 2015. Photo by Joel Jorgensen.



Least Tern, Two Rivers SRA, Douglas Co., 16 July 2014. Photo by John Carlini.

American Golden-Plovers, Eastern Rainwater Basin, York Co., 18 May 2008. Photo by Carlos Grande.

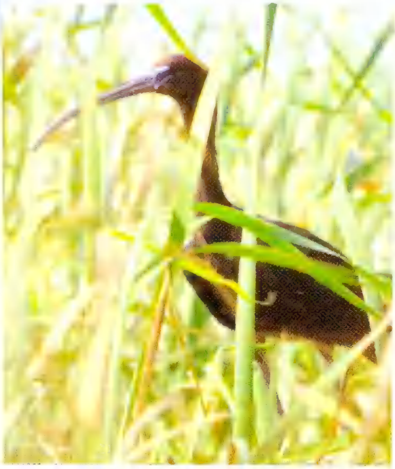
Great Blue Heron, Two Rivers SRA, Douglas Co., 26 Sept. 2014. Photo by Craig Crews.

Lesser Yellowlegs, Aurora Dam, Hamilton Co., 5 May 2015. Photo by Deb Miller.

Dunlin and Stilt Sandpiper, Eastern Rainwater Basin, Clay Co., 20 May 2008. Photo by Carlos Grande.

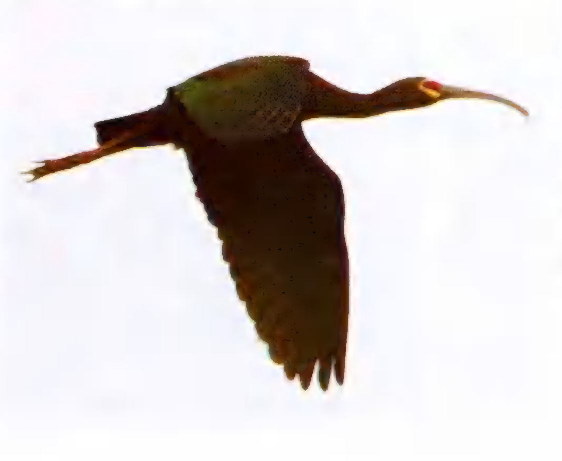
Great Egret, Aurora Dam, Hamilton Co., 28 April 2015. Photo by Deb Miller.

Sandhill Cranes, near Alda, Hall Co., 19 March 2015. Photo by Ken Shuster.



Above: Glossy Ibis on nest, Harvard WPA, Clay Co., 7 July 2015, first nesting record in the state for this species, which was documented in Nebraska in 1999. Photo by Joel Jorgensen.

Below: White-faced Ibis, Aurora Dam, Hamilton Co., 5 May 2015, showing white feathering around red facial skin and red iris not present in Glossy Ibis. Photo by Deb Miller



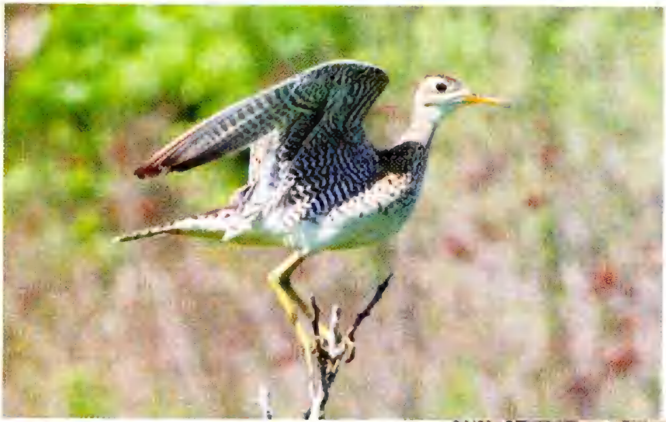
Immature Bald Eagle with Snow Goose, Kearney, Buffalo Co., 3 March 2015. Photo by Eddie Wright Denny.

Turkey Vulture, Elk City, Douglas Co., 1 April 2015. Photo by Craig Crews.

Common Goldeneye, Fremont Lakes SRA, Dodge Co., 14 March 2015. Photo by Ken Shuster.

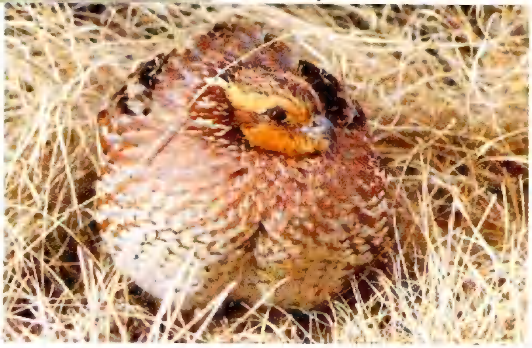
Red-tailed Hawk, Kearney, Buffalo Co., 13 May 2015. Photo by Eddie Wright Denny.

Mute Swan and cygnet, 101st and Pacific Sts., Omaha, Douglas Co., 15 May 2015. Mute Swans are now on the official list of Nebraska species; however, birds in urban areas should be closely scrutinized. Photo by Bob Wells.

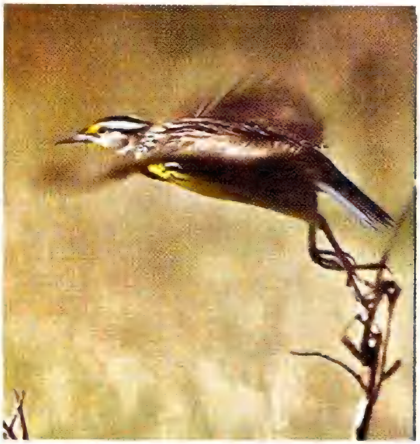


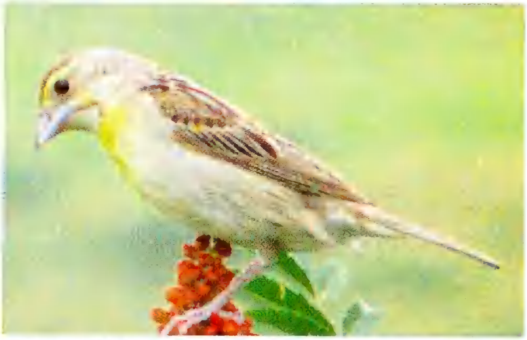
Upland Sandpiper, Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co., 9 June 2010. Photo by Gordon Warrick.

Northern Bobwhite, Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co., 28 December 2009. Photo by Gordon Warrick.

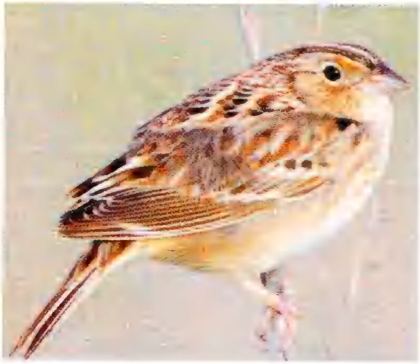


Eastern Meadowlark, near Ashland, Saunders Co., 16 April 2015. Photo by Craig Crews.

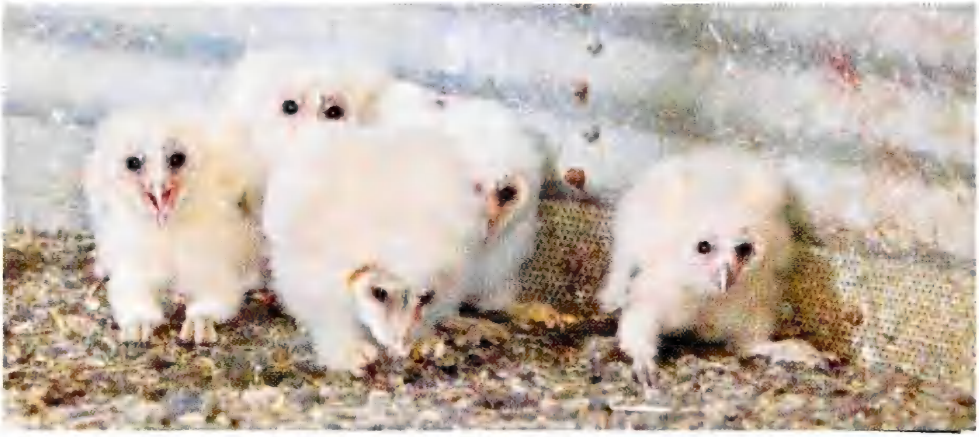




Female Dickcissel, 9 Mile Prairie, Lancaster Co., 30 June 2015. Photo by Esa Jarvi.

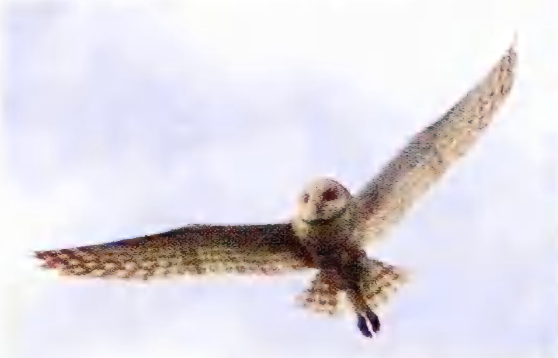


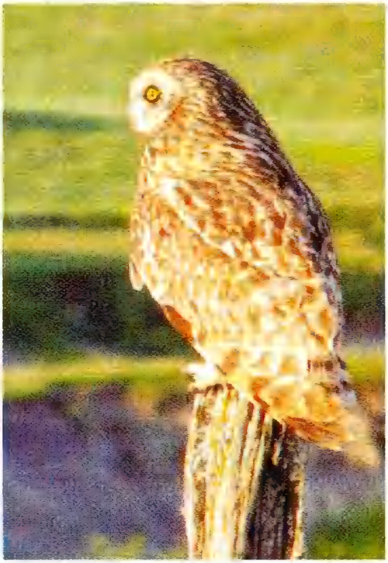
Grasshopper Sparrow, Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co., 24 April 2010.
Photo by Gordon Warrick.



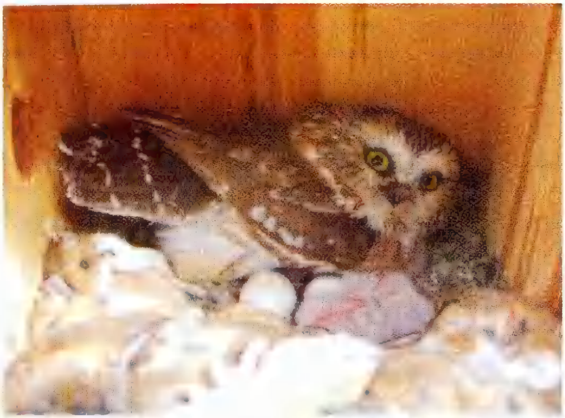
Above: Barn Owl chicks (oldest is about 5 weeks old) in grain bin near Ponca, Dixon Co., 9 July 2015. Photo by Katie Towler.

Below: Adult Barn Owl (parent of above chicks), Dixon Co., 5 July 2015. Photo by Jan Johnson.





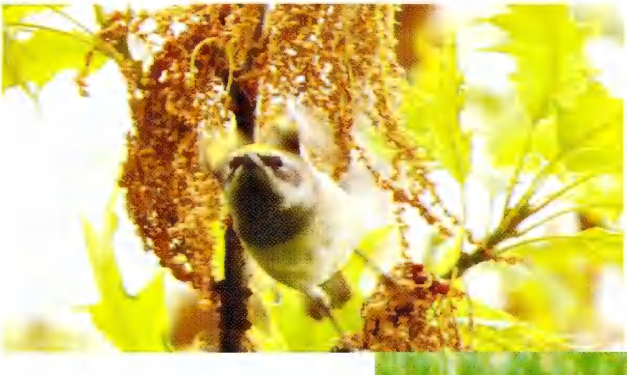
Short-eared Owl along Prairie Dog Road, Sioux Co., 5 July 2015. Photo by Bruce Walgren.



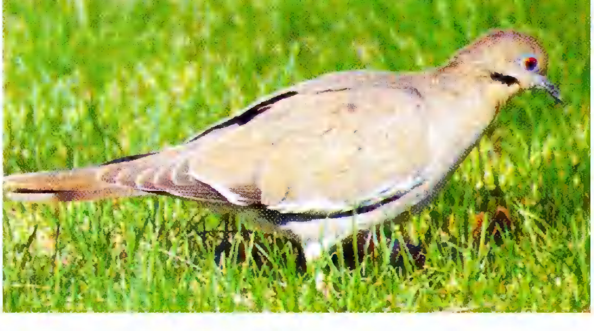
Northern Saw-whet Owl adult in nest box with eggs, chicks, deer mice (*Peromyscus* sp.) and voles (*Microtus* sp.) in the Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co., 12 March 2015. See Dec. 2014 *NBR* pages 189-193 for article on first documented Northern Saw-whet Owl nesting in Nebraska. Photo by Wayne Mollhoff.

Adult Bald Eagle, Johnson Lake, Dawson Co., 26 Jan. 2013. Photo by Deb Miller.

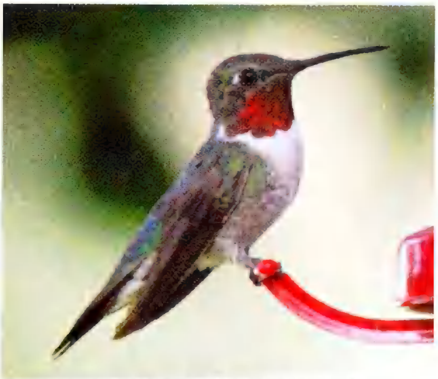
Snow Geese, Eastern Rainwater Basin, Clay Co., 11 Feb. 2006. Photo by Carlos Grande.



Golden-winged Warbler, Platte River SP, Cass Co., 10 May 2015. Photo by John Carlini.

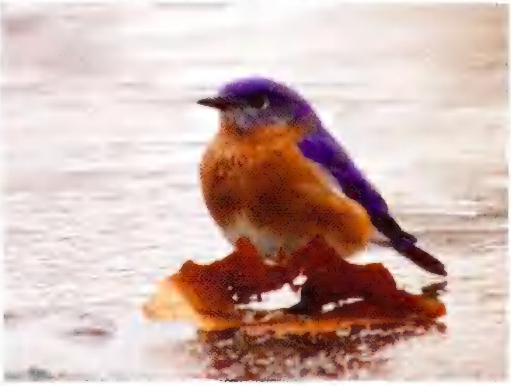


White-winged Dove, North Platte, Lincoln Co., 20 April 2015. Photo by Joel Jorgensen.

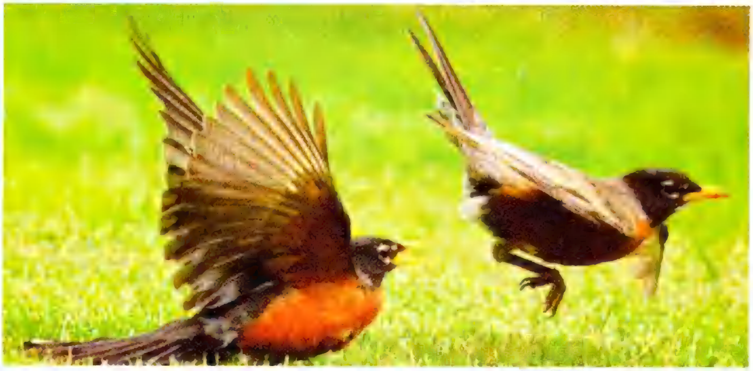


Inter-generic hybrid Ruby-throated x Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Dawes Co., 8 Aug. 2014, first documentation in Nebraska. See Sept. 2014 *NBR* pages 111-112. Photo by Juanita Whittecar.

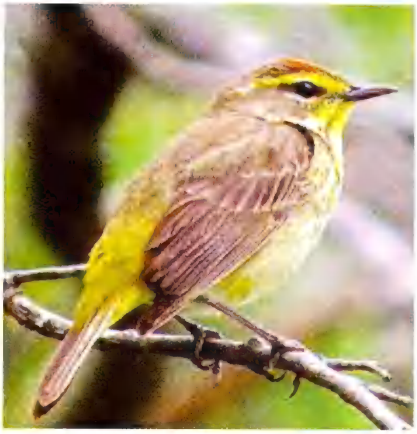
Eastern Bluebird on ice, Louisville SP, Cass Co., 20 Feb. 2015. Photo by Karen Kader.



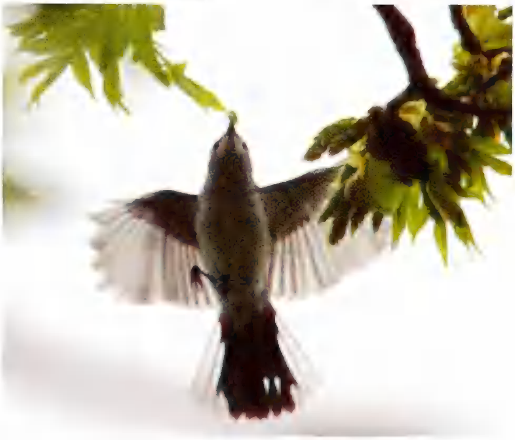
Below: American Robin males, Omaha, Douglas Co., 24 May 2015. Photo by Karen Kader.



Palm Warbler, Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., 10 May 2015. Photo by Loren Padelford.



Feeding Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co., 1 May 2015. Photo by Eddie Wright Denny.



A Hybrid Cliff x Barn Swallow from Western Nebraska

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Department of Biological Sciences
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The Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) and the Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) occupy sympatric breeding ranges across much of North America, often nesting at colony sites that contain both species (Brown and Brown 1995, 1999; Kopachena et al. 2007). Mixed-species nesting aggregations typically occur in box-shaped concrete culverts underneath roads or railways. Cliff Swallows' enclosed mud nests can be as close as 1 m to Barn Swallows' open mud nests (C. Brown, pers. obs.), and at such sites Cliff Swallows regularly usurp both inactive and active Barn Swallow nests (Brown and Brown 1999). The close proximity of these two ecologically similar species leads to at least occasional social interaction among them, such as during combined alarm responses at predators. Another consequence may be extra-pair copulation between male Cliff Swallows and female Barn Swallows, leading to intergeneric hybridization (Brown and Brown 1999; Rohwer et al. 2014).

Hybridization between the Barn Swallow and the Cliff Swallow's close relative, the Cave Swallow (*P. fulva*), was reported to be common in south Texas in the 1970s (Martin 1980). This reflected relatively recent contact between Barn Swallows and Cave Swallows, as the latter species began moving out of its ancestral sinkhole-cave nesting sites in the late 1960s and occupying highway culverts where Barn Swallows nested (Martin and Martin 1978). The high frequency of hybridization between Cave and Barn swallows in Texas suggests that similar hybridization might occur between Cliff and Barn swallows, especially given the widespread contact between the two species and the fact that Cliff Swallows are colonizing new areas in eastern North America (Brown and Brown 1995) where they are coming into contact with Barn Swallows for the first time. Despite this prediction, we have located only three documented reports of Cliff x Barn Swallow hybridization from throughout North America. In this report, we present a fourth and the first for Nebraska.

Description of Hybrid

On 12 June 2014, we visited a double-tunnel culvert underneath Interstate 80 about 8 km east-southeast of Roscoe, Keith Co., western Nebraska (41° 06.438′ N, 101° 29.634′ W). There were no active Cliff Swallow nests at the site on that date, and we estimated about 15 active Barn Swallow nests, all with eggs. Our attention was drawn to a bird's vocalization that resembled a Cliff Swallow's alarm call (Brown 1985). We observed a swallow with plumage characters clearly intermediate between those of Cliff and Barn swallows while the bird flew among Barn Swallows during an alarm response at us as we stood in the culvert.

On 17 June 2014, we returned to the site and caught the hybrid in a mist net strung across one end of the culvert. The bird was a male, determined by the

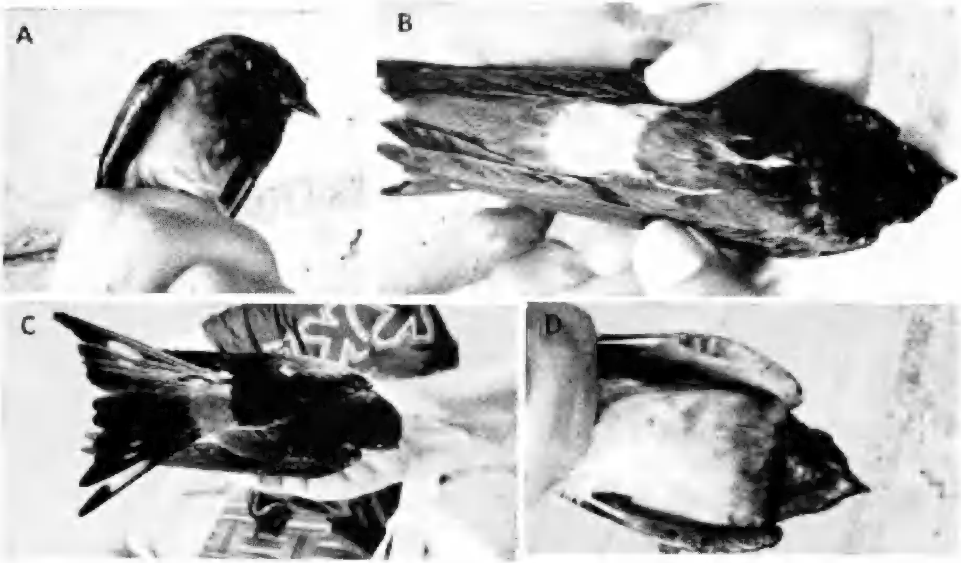

Fig. 1. A hybrid Cliff x Barn Swallow captured at a highway culvert near Roscoe, Nebraska, on 17 June 2014.

presence of a cloacal protuberance and the absence of a brood patch. The head resembled a Barn Swallow's, while its throat was Cliff Swallow-like (Fig. 1A). The hybrid lacked the blue above the shoulder characteristic of Barn Swallows, and the throat was less clearly demarcated than in Barn Swallows. It showed slight bluish spotting at the base of the throat typical of Cliff Swallows (Fig. 1A). The blue on the throat occurs in both sexes of Cliff Swallows but averages more extensive in males (Brown and Brown 1995). The rest of the dorsum was bluish as in a Barn Swallow with less of the vertical white striping of the Cliff Swallow; the orange rump seemed indistinguishable from that of a Cliff Swallow (Fig. 1B). The tail was intermediate between the two species (Fig. 1C). It had white windows in the outer four rectrices on each side, similar to a Barn Swallow but lacked the Barn Swallow's long outer tail streamers. The breast and belly more resembled a Cliff Swallow's, although with a slightly enhanced orange tone (Fig. 1D). The lower tail coverts were light orangish-buff as in a Barn Swallow.

The unflattened wing chord of the hybrid's outer primary was 110.0 mm, shorter than the average 114.7 mm wing chord measured for nine male Barn Swallows at that site on that date but near the upper end of the Cliff Swallow's wing length (Brown and Brown 2013). The hybrid weighed 19.0 g, slightly more than the average 17.6 g for the nine male Barn Swallows but lower than that of most Cliff Swallows at that time of year (Brown and Brown 1996).

The hybrid's behavior also appeared intermediate. When flying among Barn Swallows, it clearly glided more and flapped less than the Barn Swallows: the bird could easily be identified from a distance by its more Cliff Swallow-like flight before any plumage features were visible. It gave a Cliff Swallow-like alarm call on one occasion, and when released after handling it gave a vocalization much like the Barn Swallow's *chirp* call (Brown 1985).

We identified the hybrid's nest within the culvert (Fig. 2) by observing it fly to the nest repeatedly. It attended the nest with a presumably-female Barn Swallow. The nest was noticeably more flared out along the upper rim than are typical Barn Swallow nests, but there was no indication of any attempt to dome over the open nest as Cliff Swallows do when they use Barn Swallow nests. The nest appeared to have been an old Barn Swallow nest existing from a previous year, which the pair in 2014 refurbished. The nest had three eggs when first checked on 17 June 2014.

The hybrid was observed at the site on three additional visits by us or colleagues, with it last being seen on 29 June 2014. At that time, the eggs had not hatched. When we next visited the site on 6 July 2014, the hybrid and most of the Barn Swallows were gone. Apparently the nests there had failed *en masse* between 29 June and 6 July, for reasons that were unclear. Only one Barn Swallow nest remained active, but three pairs of Cliff Swallows had arrived and were occupying nests at the opposite end of the culvert and in a different tunnel from the hybrid's nest.

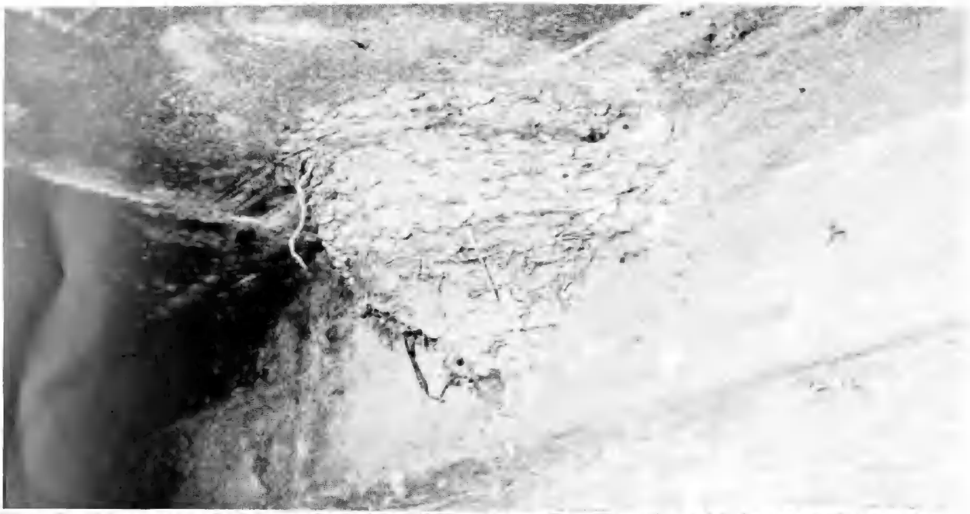

Fig. 2. Nest attended by a hybrid Cliff x Barn Swallow in a highway culvert near Roscoe, Nebraska, during June 2014.

Discussion

The previous Cliff x Barn Swallow hybrids, documented with detailed descriptions or photographs, were reported from Delaware Co., Pennsylvania, on 22 May 1878 (Trotter 1878), El Paso Co., Texas, on 14 June 1893 (Mearns 1902), and Weld Co., Colorado, on 15 July 2012 (Anonymous 2014). Additional reports of hybrids from California, Louisiana, Colorado, and New York, while possibly valid in some cases, lack descriptive details (Dittmann and Cardiff 2002; Rogers and Jaramillo 2002; Wood et al. 2011) or appear to be southwestern Cliff Swallows with dark foreheads (Anonymous 2014).

Hybridization between *Petrochelidon* and *Hirundo* swallows is thought to be caused largely by extra-pair fertilizations perpetrated by male Cliff/Cave swallows on female Barn Swallows (Brown and Brown 1999; Rohwer et al. 2014). Consequently, hybrids are raised in Barn Swallow nests and likely socially imprint on Barn Swallows. The Nebraska hybrid was consistent with this scenario: it lived at a colony site with only Barn Swallows, paired with a Barn Swallow, used a Barn Swallow-like nest, and departed from the site with other Barn Swallows. Cave x Barn Swallow hybrids typically are raised by Barn Swallow parents (Martin 1980, 1982), and a Cliff x Barn hybrid in Texas was paired with a Barn Swallow and attended a Barn Swallow-like nest (Mearns 1902).

Cliff Swallows commonly engage in extra-pair copulations (Brown and Brown 1996). When large numbers of birds gather mud, forced (and some not-forced) copulation attempts can sometimes be so frequent that successful mud-gathering is disrupted, with the birds believed to flutter their wings during mud collecting to deter extra-pair copulation attempts (Butler 1982; Brown and Brown 1996). Thus, whenever Barn Swallows gather mud near Cliff Swallows, heterospecific copulation attempts can potentially occur, and these may be more likely because Barn Swallows do not flutter their wings while gathering mud.

The relatively few documented cases of Cliff x Barn Swallow hybrids in North America, despite the two species' widely sympatric breeding ranges, suggest that some factors work to limit hybridization. These are at present unknown but may reflect Barn Swallows' increased avoidance of culverts where Cliff Swallows nest, which reduces the opportunity for contact. The number of mixed-species colonies has declined in our western Nebraska study area over the last 33 years (C. Brown, unpubl. data), with Barn Swallows moving more onto buildings or into the small road culverts that Cliff Swallows avoid. A similar situation may have occurred in Texas, where the sites with the extensive Cave x Barn Swallow hybridization from the 1970s have now become almost exclusively Cave Swallow colonies (Ormston 2001). If intergeneric swallow hybrids are less successful at surviving and/or reproducing, hybridization (if common) could select against Barn Swallows that nest near Cliff or Cave swallows and incur greater risk of extra-pair fertilizations. We should continue to monitor situations in Nebraska and elsewhere where both Cliff and Barn swallows nest together and document whether hybridization, if it occurs, could contribute to the developing ecological separation between these two species.

Acknowledgments

We thank the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Cedar Point Biological Station for use of their facilities and the National Science Foundation (DEB-1019423) for financial support.

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2014-2015 Christmas Bird Counts

by Don Paseka

Fourteen counts were held during the 2014-15 Christmas Bird Count season, which is one less than last season. Although the Beaver Valley and Harrison counts were not done this season, the Harlan County count was resumed after a twelve year hiatus and produced several noteworthy species counts. It also should be noted that the Grand Island count was held on December 13, which is one day before the official Audubon sanctioned count period begins, but its results are included in this discussion.

Following a very mild first week of November, the second week started with a sudden cold snap which persisted through the week. When the wind stopped blowing at the end of the week, most of the open water across the state had frozen. It was expected that many species had departed for the winter, but milder weather returned and lasted well into mid-December. The result was considerable open water for the counts held during the first half of the count period and respectable totals for both species (133) and individuals (246,311).

Nine species set new or tied previous high counts, including the first-ever record on a Nebraska count of Baltimore Oriole, a single bird visiting a feeder in Seward. While 19 species were found in every circle, 20 species were found in only one circle and 11 of those were single birds.

Although all the expected Anseriformes were counted, no scoters or Long-tailed Ducks were found. However, Ring-necked Ducks were found in seven circles and produced a new high count of 366, besting the previous high of 342 from 2012. The total of 41 Wood Ducks counted, 39 of which were found on the Grand Island count, was second only to the 46 found in 2012. The count of 83 Trumpeter Swans is second only to the 155 counted last year, and the 3 Tundra Swans found on the Lake McConaughy count were only the fifth time this species has been recorded on a Nebraska count.

While as expected Lake McConaughy produced the most species (100) of any of the counts, the Harlan County count provided a high proportion of the Nebraska totals for several species. For example, it produced 22,444 of the 24,137 total Snow Geese and 13,999 of the 16,119 of the Common Mergansers found this year. Overall the Harlan county total of 51,755 individuals represented 21% of this year's total for all counts.

Although Bald Eagles were found in every circle, 241 of them were found at Harlan County, helping to set a new high of 576 individuals, which easily bested the previous high of 375 from 2012. Nine circles produced a total of 3509 American Coots, a total second only to the 6163 found in 2011, but 3201 of this year's coots were found at Harlan County.

Harlan County also recorded six of the seven gull species found on this year's counts including all 17 of the Bonaparte's Gulls and 790 of the record high count of 1020 Herring Gulls. The previous high of 649 had been set in 1996.

On the Columbiformes front, as they continue their relentless quest for global domination, Eurasian Collared-Doves were counted in all circles and established a new high count of 1959, topping the old high of 1370 from 2012. Three White-winged Doves were found at Scottsbluff, which was only the second time this species has been counted on a Nebraska CBC. (A single White-winged Dove was found in 2005 and a count week bird was noted in 2009; both were on the Scottsbluff CBC.) Perhaps they're coming, too.

This year's count of 15 Merlins was another new high, bettering the old high count of 14, which was achieved on four previous counts. The Great Horned Owl count of 95 birds was the best since 110 were counted in 1989, prior to the West Nile Virus epidemic. Several species achieving second highest count status were Hairy Woodpeckers at 142 behind the 150 found last year, the 73 Yellow-rumped Warblers trailing the 92 found in 2011 and the 919 Northern Cardinals which was second only to the 1001 found in 2009.

Several sparrows also had a good year. The 5897 Tree Sparrows were the most counted since 6874 were found in 1999. The 2 Chipping Sparrows found on the North Platte count were the first since 10 were reported on the Lincoln count in 1998, and the total of 10 Lincoln's Sparrows found in three circles ranks second only to the 12 found last year. The 407 White-crowned Sparrows were a surprising new high; the Scottsbluff total alone (254 individuals) topped the old high of 222 set in 2007.

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	BOL	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co.	Lake McConaughy
Gr White-fronted Goose	1						5	
Snow Goose	1201	2			1	5	22444	181
Ross's Goose	cw						7	
Cackling Goose	181	42	5		98	10	12	40
Canada Goose	2862	1788	3050		12998	2918	567	2825
Trumpeter Swan	cw				41			36
Tundra Swan								3
Wood Duck					2	39		
Gadwall	12	7						245
American Wigeon	5	9					31	268
American Black Duck								
Mallard	1073	1259	376	4	14741	3051	7230	177
Northern Shoveler	2					6		
Northern Pintail	cw					1	1	2
Green-winged Teal	1	14					5	60
Canvasback								101
Redhead								189
Ring-necked Duck	6				8			240
Greater Scaup								72
Lesser Scaup	5				1			272
Bufflehead						3	2	310
Common Goldeneye	36	37	6		24	7	37	165
Hooded Merganser		4					1	4
Common Merganser	26	1835			29	7	13999	141
Red-breasted Merganser		1					20	1
Ruddy Duck	1	2						17
Duck sp.								
Northern Bobwhite	cw	6	56		9	9		5
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	3	3	19	3		2	33
Sharp-tailed Grouse			14	8				
Greater Prairie-Chicken			92				36	29
Wild Turkey	51	350	55	55	183	150	15	91

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Gr White-fronted Goose			1			2	9
Snow Goose	1	2			300		24,137
Ross's Goose							7
Cackling Goose	88	33	442	11		48	1,010
Canada Goose	2945	2438	4948	2834	436	4028	44,637
Trumpeter Swan			cw	6			83
Tundra Swan			cw				3
Wood Duck							41
Gadwall	18		28			24	334
American Wigeon		1	42			84	440
American Black Duck			2				2
Mallard	561	2065	7328	171	5253	2369	45,658
Northern Shoveler			52			16	76
Northern Pintail		2	16			16	38
Green-winged Teal	6		119	22			227
Canvasback						7	108
Redhead	7	1				12	209
Ring-necked Duck		8	51		1	52	366
Greater Scaup		1					73
Lesser Scaup	2	5				2	287
Bufflehead			1			1	317
Common Goldeneye		11	39	92	9	144	607
Hooded Merganser	1	2	1			1	14
Common Merganser	1		4	44	33		16,119
Red-breasted Merganser							22
Ruddy Duck							20
Duck sp.				33			33
Northern Bobwhite	7	1					93
Ring-necked Pheasant	4	4	3	1	47	11	137
Sharp-tailed Grouse							22
Greater Prairie-Chicken							157
Wild Turkey	59	103	62	76	42	45	1,337

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	BOL	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co.	Lake McConaughy
Common Loon								1
Pied-billed Grebe	1							3
Horned Grebe								1
Western Grebe								39
Clark's Grebe								1
Double-crested Cormorant							7	
American White Pelican								cw
Great Blue Heron	4		1		1	2		2
Bald Eagle	56	2	23	1	81	5	241	36
adult				1	51	3	33	
immature					21	2	13	
unspecified age	56	2	23		9		195	36
Northern Harrier	cw	12	cw	1	12	3	12	18
Sharp-shinned Hawk	cw	4						6
Cooper's Hawk	3	1	3		2		2	6
Accipiter sp.		2	1					
Red-tailed Hawk	44	48	14	3	99	21	53	35
Ferruginous Hawk								1
Rough-legged Hawk	3	1	8	6	3	2	1	3
Buteo sp.			13					
Virginia Rail								1
American Coot	16					2	3	3201
Killdeer								3
Wilson's Snipe	1							14
Bonaparte's Gull							17	
Ring-billed Gull		655					559	168
California Gull		3						3
Herring Gull		88					790	141
Thayer's Gull		1					1	3
Lesser Black-backed Gull							1	2
Glaucous Gull							1	
Rock Pigeon	68	41	20	35	168	401	32	321

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Common Loon							1
Pied-billed Grebe	1						5
Horned Grebe							1
Western Grebe			1				40
Clark's Grebe							1
Double-crested Cormorant							7
American White Pelican							
Great Blue Heron	2	1	2	1	1	1	18
Bald Eagle	4	14	11	60	17	25	576
adult				39		13	140
immature	2			16		12	66
unspecified age	2	14	11	5	17		370
Northern Harrier		1	5	7	3	2	76
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	1	1	5	1		21
Cooper's Hawk	3	3	1	3			27
Accipiter sp.				1			4
Red-tailed Hawk	53	50	25	104	22	23	594
Ferruginous Hawk			4			1	6
Rough-legged Hawk			5	5	12	9	58
Buteo sp.	3	2				2	20
Virginia Rail							1
American Coot	43	8	24		2	210	3,509
Killdeer			2			1	6
Wilson's Snipe			3				18
Bonaparte's Gull							17
Ring-billed Gull			17	43			1,442
California Gull							6
Herring Gull			1				1,020
Thayer's Gull							5
Lesser Black-backed Gull							3
Glaucous Gull							1
Rock Pigeon	2693	1043	658	319	71	428	6,298

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	BOL	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co.	Lake McConaughy
Eurasian Collared-Dove	87	27	120	85	12	242	22	175
White-winged Dove								
Mourning Dove	40	1			8	2		10
Eastern Screech-Owl	7	2	2		2	12		2
Great Horned Owl	3	12	27		4	2	3	6
Barred Owl	2	5			7			
Long-eared Owl								4
Short-eared Owl	cw							1
Medium owl sp (Asio sp)	1							
Belted Kingfisher		1	3		3	2	1	2
Red-headed Woodpecker					1			
Red-bellied Woodpecker	44	64	7		56	7	22	9
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2			3		2	
Downy Woodpecker	39	58	9	3	88	12	23	17
Hairy Woodpecker	9	16	5	3	24	13		11
Northern Flicker	57	81	10	2	13	53	67	45
Red-shafted		1	3	2			8	
Red x Yellow-shafted	1							
Yellow-shafted	56	27	2		13		47	
unspecified		53	5			53	12	45
Pileated Woodpecker					2			
American Kestrel	3	4	10	1	8	9	6	16
Merlin	2		7			1	1	3
Peregrine Falcon								
Prairie Falcon	1							1
Large falcon sp		1						
Northern Shrike	2	6	7	1	1		1	2
Blue Jay	70	95	8	2	87	45	11	23
Black-billed Magpie							3	24
American Crow	262	52	2337	14	94	20	22	4
Horned Lark			327	340	140		686	978
Black-capped Chickadee	52	55	10	9	203	7	15	11

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Eurasian Collared-Dove	49	208	178	26	58	670	1,959
White-winged Dove						3	3
Mourning Dove	365	25	10	18			479
Eastern Screech-Owl		5			4		36
Great Horned Owl	6	25		3	4		95
Barred Owl	1			2	1		18
Long-eared Owl		2					6
Short-eared Owl					1		2
Medium owl sp (Asio sp)							1
Belted Kingfisher	2	1	4	1	2	3	25
Red-headed Woodpecker				58			59
Red-bellied Woodpecker	65	30	6	112	26		448
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2		1				10
Downy Woodpecker	130	20	12	118	25	4	558
Hairy Woodpecker	14	5	5	33	4		142
Northern Flicker	64	34	14	26	18	20	504
Red-shafted	2	1	6				23
Red x Yellow-shafted						2	3
Yellow-shafted	36		8			2	191
unspecified	26	33		26	18	16	287
Pileated Woodpecker				4			6
American Kestrel	6	17	9	20	1	27	137
Merlin	1						15
Peregrine Falcon				1			1
Prairie Falcon		1	2			1	6
Large falcon sp							1
Northern Shrike	1		1	1	5	1	29
Blue Jay	350	70	11	122	47	67	1,008
Black-billed Magpie		1	2			7	37
American Crow	109		1	53	56	4	3,028
Horned Lark		20	70	1		191	2,753
Black-capped Chickadee	180	73	9	163	92	15	894

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	BOL	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co.	Lake McConaughy
Mountain Chickadee								
Tufted Titmouse					2			
Red-breasted Nuthatch		3			1	4		12
White-breasted Nuthatch	53	67	8	2	55	15	26	15
Pygmy Nuthatch								
Brown Creeper	2	6	4		2	3	3	8
Winter Wren		1			3		1	2
Marsh Wren								2
Carolina Wren	1	1			1	2		
Golden-crowned Kinglet	14	10		2	3	4	3	20
Eastern Bluebird	70	136			23	6	42	11
Mountain Bluebird							5	
Townsend's Solitaire		1					2	11
Hermit Thrush		cw					1	2
American Robin	1036	940	987	20	35	730	942	2553
Northern Mockingbird		1						
Brown Thrasher			1					
European Starling	1812	1568	480	80	648	4682	344	5998
Cedar Waxwing	246	233	9		61	86	73	120
Lapland Longspur		1			18		232	231
Snow Bunting		cw						12
Yellow-rumped Warbler	10	16	3			2	4	33
Spotted Towhee		1			2			
American Tree Sparrow	210	425	357	65	1145	139	1509	228
Chipping Sparrow								
Field Sparrow								1
Fox Sparrow	1	2			1		1	
Song Sparrow		2		3	67	1	29	10
Lincoln's Sparrow					3		1	
Swamp Sparrow					3			1
White-throated Sparrow	7	7			12	1	2	
Harris's Sparrow	8	32	21		26	12	82	4

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
Mountain Chickadee						1	1
Tufted Titmouse				22			24
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	4	16	1		8	50
White-breasted Nuthatch	161	41	6	155	60	1	665
Pygmy Nuthatch						4	4
Brown Creeper	9	3	8	16	1		65
Winter Wren				3			10
Marsh Wren			1				3
Carolina Wren	1			16			22
Golden-crowned Kinglet	31	4	8	3	1		103
Eastern Bluebird	68			95	39		490
Mountain Bluebird							5
Townsend's Solitaire						1	15
Hermit Thrush							3
American Robin	1325	88	156	130	54	313	9,309
Northern Mockingbird							1
Brown Thrasher							1
European Starling	3665	9098	5023	2414	766	932	37,510
Cedar Waxwing	74		108	72	358	13	1,453
Lapland Longspur		10					492
Snow Bunting							12
Yellow-rumped Warbler	5						73
Spotted Towhee			1	1			5
American Tree Sparrow	303	442	92	591	332	59	5,897
Chipping Sparrow			2				2
Field Sparrow							1
Fox Sparrow				1			6
Song Sparrow	23		4	42		4	185
Lincoln's Sparrow			6	cw			10
Swamp Sparrow				1			5
White-throated Sparrow	4		1	14			48
Harris's Sparrow	8		3	58	11		265

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Ames	BOL	Calamus-Loup	Crawford	DeSoto-Boyer	Grand Island	Harlan Co.	Lake McConaughy
White-crowned Sparrow	1	2			33	7	38	25
Sparrow sp.		15						
Dark-eyed Junco	300	489	336	63	847	155	427	414
Slate-colored		333		25			339	
Oregon		4		3			4	
Pink-sided				2				
White-winged				8				
Gray-headed								
unspecified subspecies	300	152	336	25	847	155	84	414
Northern Cardinal	55	116	20		202	44	40	21
Red-winged Blackbird	2124	79	30		404	9	444	14
Western Meadowlark	3		31	3	cw	199		
Meadowlark sp.	19	39			246		246	68
Yellow-headed Blackbird					1			
Rusty Blackbird	8						33	1
Brewer's Blackbird					1			
Common Grackle	26		4			182		6
Great-tailed Grackle						160		
Brown-headed Cowbird		1					1	3
blackbird sp.		198						
Baltimore Oriole		1						
Purple Finch	13	31	2		cw			
House Finch	78	76	70	2	8	90	73	92
Common Redpoll					1			
Pine Siskin		3	1				2	42
American Goldfinch	65	169	73	6	195	56	90	361
House Sparrow	188	81	21	40	328	277	40	251
TOTAL SPECIES	66	75	49	30	70	57	76	100
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	12,694	11,452	9,087	878	33.637	13,935	51,755	21,432

2014-2015 Christmas Bird Count

	Lincoln	Norfolk	North Platte	Omaha	Ponca SP	Scottsbluff	TOTAL
White-crowned Sparrow		6	11	8	22	254	407
Sparrow sp.							15
Dark-eyed Junco	638	405	139	725	122	324	5,384
Slate-colored	305		133			62	1,197
Oregon	2		5			38	56
Pink-sided			1			6	9
White-winged							8
Gray-headed						1	1
unspecified subspecies	331	405		725	122	217	4,113
Northern Cardinal	177	47	13	149	35		919
Red-winged Blackbird	125	360	6112	361	260	69	10,391
Western Meadowlark		1	4		6		247
Meadowlark sp.				21		29	668
Yellow-headed Blackbird							1
Rusty Blackbird				1			43
Brewer's Blackbird			150				151
Common Grackle	3	1	7				229
Great-tailed Grackle			cw				160
Brown-headed Cowbird		10	2		10		27
blackbird sp.	600						798
Baltimore Oriole							1
Purple Finch	10	5		7			68
House Finch	252	25	53	25	4	106	954
Common Redpoll							1
Pine Siskin	34		1	cw		30	113
American Goldfinch	308	165	107	265	212	51	2,123
House Sparrow	900	1114	215	368	163	226	4,212
TOTAL SPECIES	60	58	75	64	49	57	133
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	16,575	18,166	26,483	10,165	9,050	11,002	246,311

2014-2015 CBC Site Data

	Date	Species	Individuals	Observers	Total Party Hours^{d}	Low Temp.	High Temp.		Sky	Precipitation
Ames	18 Dec	66	12,694	13	44	28	34		cloudy	lt. snow am
Branched Oak-Seward	14 Dec	75	11,452	17	60	53	59		cloudy	none
Calamus-Loup	2 Jan	49	9,087	10	31	7	23		cloudy; pt. clear	none
Crawford	27 Dec	30	878	1	8	7	24		clear	none
DeSoto-Boyer	3 Jan	70	33,637	23	69	24	36		cloudy	none
Grand Island	13 Dec	57	13,935	18	39	46	54		cloudy	misty
Harlan Co.	16 Dec	76	51,755	10	48	20	27		pt. cloudy	none
Lake McConaughy	27 Dec	100	21,432	15	51	8	28		clear; pt. cloudy	none
Lincoln	20 Dec	60	16,575	40	105	32	37		cloudy	none
Norfolk	20 Dec	58	18,166	17	32	N/A	N/A		fog; cloudy	none
North Platte	21 Dec	75	26,483	7	9	19	44		clear, pt. clear	none
Omaha	20 Dec	64	10,165	34	75	32	34		cloudy	lt. rain am
Ponca S.P.	14 Dec	49	9,050	14	16	N/A	52		foggy; cloudy	lt. rain
Scottsbluff	20 Dec	57	11,002	7	21	29	47		pt. clear, clear	none
		133	246,311^{a}	226^{a}		25^{b}	38^{b}			
a-total (sum of column values)				175^{c}						
b-average										
c-number of people who participated in CBCs. Note: many observers participated in more than one CBC.										
d-the sum of hours spent driving and walking during daylight, excluding feeder watching and owling										

2014-2015 CBC Participants

Ames Larry Einemann, Jane Hollst, Paula Hoppe, Rita Jensen, Jan Johnson, Richard Johnson, Clem Klaphake, Don Paseka (compiler), Janis Paseka, Gary Roberts, Ken Shuster, Ruth Stearns, Jerry Toll (13)

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Calamus-Loup Betsy Bolli, Jesse Bolli, Kathi Gerten, Robert Gerten, Robin Harding, David Heidt (compiler), Marty Mathieson, Richard Mathieson, Lanny Randolph, Duane Wolff (10)

Crawford Michael Willison (1) [Bruce Walgren, compiler]

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North Platte Virginia Clark, Neal Feldman, Gregg Hoover, Rich Junker, Jim Petersen, Matthew Walker, T.J. Walker (compiler) (7)

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SPRING FIELD REPORT, Mar 2015 to May 2015

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INTRODUCTION

This was a largely uneventful spring in terms of major events, as most species stayed within their ranges and movement timing parameters. There are always a few stochastic exceptions, but no clear pattern of, for example, early arrival dates was discernible. However, several interesting situations came to light, and there were a few rarities detected. A Couch's Kingbird in Sarpy Co was well-described but awaits a determination by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee as to whether the evidence is strong enough to add this species to the Official State Bird List. Other exciting finds were a wintering Brown Pelican, possibly of the Pacific Coast subspecies, a beautifully-photographed Arctic Tern, a Gyrfalcon, and no less than two Virginia's Warblers. Most of the afore-mentioned "interesting situations" are better-described as candidates for "food for thought", and included the plethora of Glossy Ibis reports, as well as surprising numbers of Thayer's, Lesser Black-backed, Glaucous, and Great Black-backed Gulls. There was a convincing report of a Black Rail; we know almost nothing about this species in Nebraska. Reports of nesting Barn Owls and White-winged Doves are increasing; both species appear to be continuing northward range expansions. Range expansions westward in the south related to maturing riparian and upland second-growth forests are noted for Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, and Summer Tanager. Western hummingbirds are appearing in spring, an unprecedented phenomenon as far as we know in Nebraska; the 3rd and 4th spring Calliopes and 2nd and 3rd spring Broad-taileds were photographed. An interesting situation in population genetics is the recent "outbreak" of sightings of phenotypically pure-looking Eastern Towhees in Scotts Bluff County; some discussion of this is included here under the Eastern Towhee species account.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
Cem: Cemetery
CL: Carter L, Omaha
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
FNNWR: Fort Niobrara NWR, Cherry Co
FRSHP: Fort Robinson SHP, Dawes Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Cedar/Knox Cos
HCR: Harlan Co Res, Harlan Co
HL: Holmes L, Lincoln, Lancaster Co

ICSP: Indian Cave SP, Nemaha and Richardson Cos
imm: immature
Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Saunders and Lancaster Cos
juv: juvenile
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LBN: Lakes Babcock & North, Platte Co
LO: L Ogallala, Keith Co
LSWNC: Lincoln Saline Wetlands NC, Lancaster Co
m.ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NOURC: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PP: Pioneers Park, Lincoln
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
Res: Reservoir
RWB: wetland complex in several counties of south-central and southeast Nebraska
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SHP: State Historical Park
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
VNWR: Valentine NWR, Cherry Co
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WSW: Whitehead Saline Wetland, Lincoln, Lancaster Co

OBSERVERS

ABo: Ashley Bowers, Kearney
AC: A. Clarke, Omaha
AD: Ann Duey, Scottsbluff
AF: Andrew Furman, Wahoo
AG: Alan Grenon, Seattle, WA
AK: Alice Kenitz, Gering
AMa: Adam Martin, Olympia, WA
AP: Andrew Pierson, Kearney
ARa: Amanda Rager, Omaha
ARy: Al Reyer, Bellevue
AVe: Adam Vesely, Scottsbluff
BFH: Bill F. Huser, South Sioux City
BG: Betty Grenon, Bellevue
BHG: Bob Hersh-Geer, Dunning
BP: Brian Peterson, Omaha
BSt: Barbara Straus, Lincoln

BSc: Bob Schallmann, Omaha
BW: Bob Wells, Omaha
BWe: Bruce Wendorff, Lincoln
CCh: Cheryl Chessick, Lake Oswego, OR
CG: Cory Gregory, Elk Grove, CA
CLi: Chris Lituma, Knoxville, TN
CNK: Clem N. Claphake, Bellevue
CRi: Carrick Rice, Glen Ellyn, IL
CT: Cleopatra Thomas, Creighton
CWo: Colin Woolley, Portland, OR
D&JP: Don and Jan Paseka, Ames
DAr: Dennis Arp, Culbertson
DBr: Denise Bretting, Loveland, CO
DH: Dave Heidt, Norfolk
DHa: Dave Hawksworth, Albuquerque, NM
DL: Dan Leger, Lincoln
DM: Don Maas, Choctaw, OK
DP: Dave Pantos, Omaha
DT: David True, Yankton, SD
DTa: Diane Tandelsie, Torrington, WY
EA: Edward Allen, Lincoln
EB: Elliott Bedows, Bellevue
EBr: Ed Brogie, Laurel
EJ: Esa Jarvi, Lincoln
EJo: Earl Johnson, Scottsbluff
EMC: E. M. Cisne, Lincoln
GR: Gary Roberts, Fremont
GSm: Gary Small, Vermillion, SD
GW: Gregory Wright, Halsey
IL: Ian Lewis, Poole, England
J&GB: Jay & Ginger Belsan, Ogallala
J&JH: James & Judy Haver, Gothenburg
JBo: Jesse Bolli, Beatrice
JC: John Carlini, Lincoln
JCh: Judy Chandlee, Minatare
JCr: Jonathan Crews, Omaha
JD: Jeff Drahota, Lincoln
JDa: Joshua Davis, St. Paul, MN
JG: Joe Gubanyi, Seward
JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, Lincoln
JGr: Jonas Grundman, Omaha
JJ: Jan Johnson, Wakefield
JLL: Jeanine L. Lackey, Bellevue
JMi: Jeannie Mitchell, Elbert, CO
JO: Jim Ochsner, Ogallala
JR: Justin Rink, Omaha
JSS: Jason St. Sauver, Sudbury, MA

JT: Jerry Toll, Omaha
JWh: Juanita Whittecar, Chadron
KD: Kathy DeLara, Mitchell
KF: Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC
KGo: Katie Gooby, Omaha
KH: Knut Hansen, Acton, MA
KS: Kent Skaggs, Kearney
KSc: Kathy Schwery, Plattsmouth
L&BP: Loren and Babs Padelford, Bellevue
LBo: Lucas Bobay, Holly Springs, NC
LD: Laurie DeWispelaere, Glennallen, AK
LDe: Linda Deeds, North Platte
LE: Larry Einemann, Lincoln
LPl: Linda Plock, Lincoln
LR: Lanny Randolph, Kearney
LS: Larry Snyder, Kimball
MB: Mark Brogie, Creighton
MBe: Mitzi Beatty, Fremont
MCS: Matthew C. Sittel, Bellevue
MLa: Michael Lanzone, Somerset, PA
MMc: Mike McCloy, Southern Pines, NC
MP: Melissa Panella, Lincoln
MSt: Melanie Steskal, Valentine
MUs: Moni Usasz, Lincoln
MVD: Matthew Van Den Broeke, Lincoln
MW: Michael Willison, Lincoln
MWi: Mike Wiebelhaus, Stanton
NA: Noah Arthur, Lincoln;
NM: Nial Moores, Busan, Korea
NR: Neal Ratzlaff, Omaha
NV: Nick Varvel, Olathe, KS
PD: Paul Dunbar, Hastings
PH: Paula Hoppe, Colon
PMH: Peter M. Hill, Whiteclay
PP: Peter Pyle, Honolulu, HI
PRe: Paul Regnier, Baileys Harbor, WI
PSa: Phyllis Salyards, Hastings
RBa: Roland Barth, Bellevue
RG: Robert Gibson, Lincoln
RH: Robin Harding, Kearney
RPe: Roger Pehrson, Laurel
RS: Rick Schmid, Omaha
RSg: Ruben Siegfried, Gering
RSt: Ruth Stearns, Lincoln
RW: Rick Wright, Little Falls, NJ
SB: Scott Buss, Norfolk
SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA

SK: Steve Kruse, Lincoln
SM: Steve Morris, Grand Island
SMa: Sam Manning, Omaha
SPf: Sharon Pfeifer, Lake Oswego, OR
SQ: Susan Quinn, Nebraska City
SSc: Shari Schwartz, Lincoln
SSm: Scott Schmidt, Blair
SW: Scott Wessel, Norfolk
TEL: Thomas E. Labedz, Lincoln
TF: Timothy French, Omaha
TFi: Tessa Fiore, Omaha
TFu: Tyler Funk, Charleston, IL
TG: Tom Gannon, Lincoln
TH: Tim Hajda, Broken Bow
TJW: T. J. Walker, Brady
TMo: Terry Moline, Kearney
TW: Todd Wills, Abingdon, MD
VC: Virginia Clark, North Platte
WF: William Flack, Kearney
WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: The 16 birds photographed on a barn roof about 15 miles south of Holdrege 6 May (photo fide JGJ) was intriguing in that a group of 19, mostly juvs, was near Holdrege 24 Oct 2009 (TH) and a single was near Holdrege 25 Sep-8 Oct 2012 (JD fide JGJ; KS; Brogie 2013).

Greater White-fronted Goose: Three with Canada Geese in Loup Co 1 Mar (LR, RH) likely wintered there, and 1-6 were in Scotts Bluff Co 14 Mar (RSg, KD) where rare in spring.

Snow Goose: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Ross's Goose: A blue phase hybrid Ross's x Snow Goose at Grandpa's Steakhouse Pond, Kearney, 7 Mar (NA) was well described; this is the first report of this form in Nebraska, although there are 6 records of blue-phase Ross's Geese.

Cackling Goose: Rare in late spring and early summer, one was in Sarpy Co 25 May (BP) and 3 were at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co, 26 May (CCh, SPf). Best counts were 1600 in Dawson Co and 1560 in Lincoln Co 7 Mar (CG). A report of a very dark bird with a prominent white neck ring at Grandpa's Steakhouse Pond, Kearney, 7 Mar (NA) was of interest; *Branta hutchinsii,* the expected form in Nebraska, occasionally shows a white neck ring (Baldassarre, *Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North America*).

Canada Goose: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Mute Swan: A resident pair near One Pacific Place, Omaha, had 5 cygnets 13 May 2015; this captive pair has raised cygnets there for several years; 8 were raised in 2014 but were not seen after mid-Sep (fide BW). This pair may be a significant source for increasingly numerous sightings of Mute Swans in the Omaha area. The only other report was of a near-adult near Kearney 23 Apr that had been present through winter (AF, JGJ).

Trumpeter Swan: The last report of the wintering birds at CL was of 2 on 13 Mar (TW); 31 were still there 9 Mar (JR). Scattered statewide reports during Mar were mostly of migrants. Reports of breeding in areas peripheral to the Sandhills continue: the established pair near Ravenna was there as early as 1 Mar, on ice (LR, RH), and were "acting broody" 29 Mar (TEL); a pair on Overton L, Holt Co, 15 Apr was "apparently nesting" (JGJ); and a pair along the Elkhorn River in Antelope Co 9 Apr (SW fide JGJ) apparently was there in 2014 also (fide JGJ) and was not far from a pair (possibly the same pair) nesting on Beaver Creek in extreme northwest Boone Co (fide JGJ).

Tundra Swan: The only reports were of the two, an ad and an imm, that wintered at CL; last date was 13 Mar (BSc, JR).

Wood Duck: Reports were routine of this fairly common west to common elsewhere spring migrant.

Gadwall: An apparent hybrid with Northern Shoveler was at HCR 22 Mar (KS, photo). Pyle (*Identification Guide to North American Birds*) lists a citation to previous reports of this hybrid combination.

Eurasian Wigeon: There was one report of this rare spring migrant, mostly occurring in central Nebraska: a male at HCR 1 Apr (KS) was the 33rd spring report in all.

American Wigeon: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

American Black Duck: Less than annual in spring, only one was reported, at Columbus 2 Mar (SB).

Mallard: Early broods were at Heron Haven, Omaha, 3 May (BP).

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Cinnamon Teal: There were more reports than usual, involving some 20 individuals from central and western Nebraska as expected; easterly, where rare, were singles at HL 2 Apr (RG, m. ob.) and LSWNC 13-26 Apr (MW, m. ob.). An unusual combination was the HL Cinnamon Teal accompanied by a Long-tailed Duck (LE).

Northern Shoveler: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Northern Pintail: May reports are not unusual in potential breeding locations away from the Sandhills; 3 at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, 31 May (MW) and one at Tamora WPA, Seward Co, 12 May (TG) may have been breeders.

Green-winged Teal: Spring migration is protracted, with many individuals still in the state into late May; there were at least 10 reports after 15 May (m. ob.) from counties south of the Platte River Valley. Breeding is rare anywhere in Nebraska.

Canvasback: A brood of 6 with a female was between mile markers 113 and 114 along Highway 2 in Sheridan Co 21 May (LE); small numbers breed regularly in the western Sandhills.

Redhead: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Ring-necked Duck: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

Greater Scaup: 1-2 at VNWR 21-24 Mar (CRi) were 3rd-latest in May; there are no Jun reports and only 2 for Jul. Four at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, 15 May (LE) were rather late also.

Lesser Scaup: Reports were routine of this common to abundant statewide spring migrant.

White-winged Scoter: Only the 27th spring record was provided by two molting first-year males at Offutt Air Force Base L, Sarpy Co, 26-28 Mar (JR, m. ob.).

Black Scoter: A fem in Cedar Co 10 Apr (MB; details provided) was only the 6th documented spring record for the state.

Long-tailed Duck: There were two reports of this rare annual spring visitor: one was photographed at HL 2 Apr (SK fide LE), and another was in Cedar Co 10 Apr (MB).

Bufflehead: One at VNWR 24 May (CRi) was rather late; last dates for migrants are at the end of May. There is only one breeding record for the state, but there are several records of birds lingering into summer in or near the western Sandhills.

Common Goldeneye: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Barrow's Goldeneye: One of 4 fem goldeneyes in Sarpy Co 22 Mar with varying amounts of yellow in their bills included one with "over half the bill yellow", considered a "probable" Barrow's (ARy). Interestingly, of 13 total spring reports for Nebraska, 8 are from the east, suggesting a northern (Minnesota?) rather than western provenance.

Hooded Merganser: Reports of this species in late spring should indicate gender. The presence of males in breeding plumage at this time of year is indicative of potential breeding, of interest as this species appears to be expanding its breeding range westward. The vast majority of late spring and early summer reports are of imm birds that have not attained sexual maturity.

Common Merganser: Reports were routine of this locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Red-breasted Merganser: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern and rare western spring migrant.

Ruddy Duck: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Northern Bobwhite: There were numerous reports from the Platte River Valley counties southward, as expected, and in the north, there were reports west to Custer Co (TJW, TH), as well as 2 reports from eastern Cherry Co, likely the west edge of the expected northern range: Hackberry L in VNWR 16 May (RSt), and FNNWR 16 May (SQ). None were reported from the west, although the species occurs in the Platte River Valley west to Scotts Bluff Co.

Gray Partridge: There was one report of this uncommon northeastern resident: 2 at VNWR on 15 May (EB).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: A group of 18 birds on a Loup Co booming ground 12 Apr included one hybrid with Greater Prairie-Chicken (RSt); this hybrid occurs quite often, illustrating the close taxonomic relationship between the two species.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Reports of interest were from opposite ends of the range. In Dakota Co, the best count of 3 leks was 9 birds 14 Mar (BFH), best count at SCP was 3 birds 13 Apr (LE), and in Arthur Co, 2 leks were found 22 Apr (JGJ).

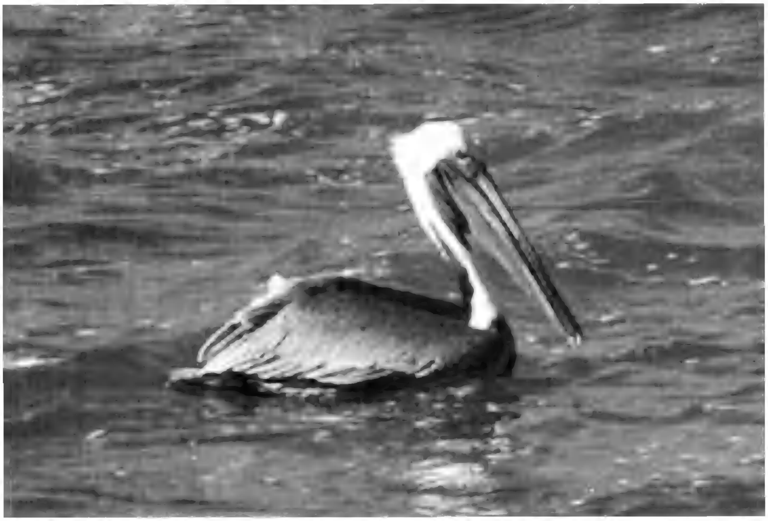
Wild Turkey: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Common Loon: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Pied-billed Grebe: Rather early for the westerly location were 2 at LO 26 Mar (IL); early dates in the Panhandle are 24-30 Mar. Best count was a moderate 39 in Lancaster Co 17 Apr (LE).

Horned Grebe: The 46 at BOL 17 Apr (LE) was a good tally; high counts range from 47 to 236.

Eared Grebe: Reports were routine of this common west and central, fairly common east, spring migrant.



This Brown Pelican, apparently of the Pacific Coast subspecies based on the reddish proximal gular pouch coloration, wintered at Sutherland Res, Lincoln Co, 26 Dec 2014 to13 Mar 2015, here photographed by Ruth Stearns 22 January 2015.

Western Grebe: Spring concentrations are lower than those in fall; best count was only 475, at LM 12 Apr (TJW), compared with the high spring counts of 14,100-18,000. Two were at PL 8 May (TG), one lingering until 14 May (LE).

Clark's Grebe: Only two were reported, both at the eastern edge of the expected spring range: singles were at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 17 May (GR, m. ob.) and North Platte 27 May (TJW).

Double-crested Cormorant: A maximum of 26 wintered at Sutherland Res, dwindling to 3 on 26 Feb (SJD); a few migrants apparently arrived soon after, as 14 were there 6 Mar (SQ). Rather early were singles in Jefferson Co 11 Mar (CNK) and Lancaster Co 12 Mar (LE); early dates are in late Feb.

American White Pelican: One showing a bill knob was rather early at Calamus Res, Loup Co, 3 Mar (PRe). Early dates are in late Feb.

Brown Pelican: The bird that wintered at Sutherland Res was last reported 13 Mar (MB) and was not present 28 Mar (TEL). It was considered to be of the Pacific Coast subspecies based on its reddish proximal gular pouch coloration (RSt photo; MB, SJD); there is some evidence for occurrence of Pacific Coast birds on the Gulf Coast (see Bird Forum posts by Mark Bartosik). Pacific Coast birds generally migrate greater distances than those on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.

American Bittern: One at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co, 31 Mar (AP) was rather early; early dates are 25-26 Mar.

Least Bittern: The only reports of this species were of one at Waco WPA, York Co, 21-22 May (DL, GR) and 2 at Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 27 May (MB).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Great Egret: Generally rare in spring in the west, there were 3 reports: one in North Platte 23 Apr (TJW), one at LO 18 May (JGJ), another there 30 Apr (MW, KH), and 1-2 in Scotts Bluff Co 22-24 May (AK, KD).

Snowy Egret: The 5 at BOL 5 May (MW) was a good count; high counts are 5-28.

Little Blue Heron: None were reported of this uncommon east and central, rare west, spring migrant.

Cattle Egret: Rather early were singles in Dodge Co 9 Apr (MBe) and Sarpy Co 10 Apr (ARa); early dates are 3-7 Apr.

Green Heron: Reports were routine of this common southeast, rare northwest, spring migrant.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: None were reported of this rare southeast spring migrant.

Glossy Ibis: As stated by Joel Jorgensen: "[It is] remarkable how numerous this species has become in such a short period (first state record was in 1999)." This spring there were 8 reported 3-24 May, from 6 eastern RWB locations, most with White-faced Ibises (JGJ, LE, NR). This number of reports has become the norm in the last few years.

White-faced Ibis: The 135 in the eastern RWB 8 May (JGJ) was a good count; high counts are 150-300.

Turkey Vulture: The 150 at a roost in Valentine 2 Apr (MSt) was a record high spring count, barely ahead of the 125 at a Lincoln roost 30 Mar (MUs). Previous high count was 95.

Osprey: One at Offutt Base L, Sarpy Co, 13 Mar (ARy) was the second-earliest documented record; arrival dates are 19-22 Mar. Nesting attempts continued apace in Scotts Bluff Co, where there were at least two active nests. One was at a regular site on River Road, Scottsbluff, where an ad appeared 18 Apr and incubation was underway 9 May (KD, AK), and the other was at a new site at the junction of Highway 26, Sunflower Oil Road and Spring Creek Road, where nest building was underway 5 May (KD). The nest platform near L Minatare only had minimal nest material 31 May (DTa). As yet, none of the several nesting attempts by Osprey in Nebraska has been successful.

Mississippi Kite: Spring migrants occasionally may occur anywhere in the state away from known breeding locations; this spring singles were in southwestern Dixon Co 10 May (JJ) and in Kearney Co 28 May (KS).

Bald Eagle: Best count was the 126 at Hersh Ranch, Blaine Co, 7 Mar (BHG); high spring counts are 144-800.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Cooper's Hawk: Several resident birds were reported; specific breeding activity dates were of one at a nest in Lancaster Co 30 Apr (LE) and another nest-building in Lincoln 20 Mar (RSt). These are typical dates for this species.

Northern Goshawk: Identification of this species can be tricky without a good view; 2 reports of possibles were from Omaha 11 Mar and Cherry Co 8 Apr, both within the expected migration period for this rare migrant.

Red-shouldered Hawk: There was only one report of this rare eastern hawk: one was in Johnson Co 22 Mar (JGJ).

Broad-winged Hawk: Westerly migrants have been increasingly reported in recent years; singles were at Brady 23 Apr (TJW) and at Dix 30 Apr (JJ). A group of 3 juvs was well-documented by description, photos, and sound recording at FRSHP 20 May (RW), two of which were seen again 25 May (MMc).

Swainson's Hawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Red-tailed Hawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Rough-legged Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Ferruginous Hawk: Nests were reported in northwest Cherry, southwest Hooker, and northeast Lincoln Cos (JGJ, TJW), all at the eastern edge of the breeding range. An ad and a nestling were in the same Dundy Co nest 17 May that was used in 2014 (JGJ). Last to leave the south-central wintering range was one in Adams Co 28 Mar (TMo).

Golden Eagle: Last easterly birds reported were singles in Sherman Co 6 Mar (JGJ) and Brown Co 16 Mar (AMa).

Black Rail: Occurrence of this species in Nebraska is enigmatic, with only 2 documented records but several others highly suggestive of this species. Adding to the latter was a convincing sighting at PP 11 May (LE). The observer noted: "A small, plump rail pops out onto the boardwalk before disappearing into the stand of rough leaf dogwood on the east side of the boardwalk adjacent to the larger marsh to the east. ...... The rail was small, all dark underneath and dorsally and had a black stubby bill. The wings in flight were all dark--black on back and gray/black primaries making a bit of contrast between the back and wing feathers. There was no white, rufous, or brown in the wing plumage as in the other rails." Most sightings in Nebraska have been in May-Jun and may represent overshooting migrants; according to current field guides, occurrence in Nebraska is marginal at best.

Virginia Rail: One along Highway 26 near Lewellen 28 Mar (DBr) provided the second-earliest spring date for the state, although wintering probably occurs at this site; usual early dates are Apr 9-12.

Sora: The 15 a few miles south of Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 16 May (TJW) was second-highest spring count on record; high is 51.

American Coot: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Sandhill Crane: One of two veteran observers noted that "they seem to be staging farther east each year", as "lots" were in Hamilton Co 27 Mar (SM), and the other noted that the "hundreds" over Creighton 23 Mar were the "most here in many years" (MB). Farther east, 5 were over Saunders Co 13 Mar (CNK), 15 were there 15 Mar (PH), and one was in Lancaster Co 21 Mar (LE). Migrants had generally moved on by mid-Apr as expected; reports in May can indicate potential breeding. Three at the upper end of Enders Res, Chase Co, 2 May (JGJ) might have been late migrants, but one foraging in a "large area of suitable habitat" in Seward Co 12 May (JG) was a bit more intriguing. Of interest was a report and photo of 8 birds in Lincoln Co 8-9 May, consisting of 4 ads and 4 juvs (VC). According to "Birds of North America Online", "In *Grus canadensis tabida* [the subspecies that breeds in Nebraska], yearlings will remain in pre-breeding flocks during their 2nd summer, but these groups rarely persist during migration or over winter. Yearlings 12-15 month-old do not pair in these summer flocks. Young non-breeders are the most mobile social class and are generally more nomadic and gregarious than adults". Thus this flock may have contained both one- and two-year-old non-breeders, the latter resembling ads. Actual breeding occurred again at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, where a pair with one young was seen 23 May (KD, AK). Breeding occurred near Verdigre, where adults with two small young were captured on a trail camera 20 May (MWi fide JGJ).

Common Crane: A Facebook report that a "satellite tagged Common Crane left the Texas Panhandle and arrived on the Platte River in Nebraska on Thursday, March 12, 2015" was incorrect; it is highly unlikely that there are any tagged Common Cranes in North America, and a later correction stated, "One adult COMMON CRANE, from the Texas Panhandle, is NOT QUITE on the Platte River in Nebraska yet, but still in the TEXAS Panhandle" (fide JGJ). Apparently this individual was not sighted in Nebraska this spring.

Whooping Crane: Reports were routine of this uncommon central spring migrant.

Black-necked Stilt: One to two at Tamora WPA, Seward Co, 18-23 May (KS, m. ob.) were easterly, where rare.

This Sandhill Crane family was photographed by a trail camera operated by Mike Wiebelhaus near Verdigre 20 May 2015. The photo was posted on the Nebraska Fish and Game Association outdoor forum.

American Avocet: Reports were routine of this common west and central spring migrant, uncommon east.

Black-bellied Plover: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

American Golden-Plover: Reports were routine of this locally common central and eastern spring migrant, uncommon west.

Snowy Plover: None were reported of this rare central spring migrant.

Semipalmated Plover: Reports were routine of this locally common central and eastern spring migrant, uncommon west.

Piping Plover: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant and local breeder.

Killdeer: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant and breeder.

Mountain Plover: The only reports were from regular sites in Kimball Co 29 Apr-14 May (KH, MW, LBo).

Spotted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Solitary Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Greater Yellowlegs: One at Rowe Sanctuary, Buffalo Co, 7 Mar (ABo) was rather early; early dates are Mar 1-3.

Willet: Migrants, especially in the east, move through in a narrow time-period; reports there were 21 Apr (6 at BOL; LE) through 9 May in Webster Co (WF).

Lesser Yellowlegs: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Upland Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Whimbrel: There were 7 reported at 5 locations of this rare migrant. Eastern records are less-than-annual, and so 2 at Tamora WPA, Seward Co, 10 May (KS) were a good sighting. Elsewhere, 2 were at Enders Res, Chase Co, 2 May (JGJ), one was at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 16 May (m. ob., NOU field trip), and 2 were at LO 18 May (JGJ).

Long-billed Curlew: Reports were routine of this fairly common central and western spring migrant, casual east.

Hudsonian Godwit: Reports were routine of this fairly common central and eastern spring migrant, casual west.

Marbled Godwit: Reports were routine of this fairly common central and western spring migrant, uncommon east.

Ruddy Turnstone: Reports were routine of this uncommon central and eastern spring migrant, casual west.

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common central spring migrant, uncommon east and west.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Dunlin: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern and central spring migrant, casual west.

Baird's Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: One photographed at LSWNC 25-26 Apr (MW, BP; m. ob.) was rather early; documented early dates are 19-24 Apr.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: One at Jack Sinn 30 May (MW, details) was the 4th-latest spring record for the state; there are only 4 Jun records. Another was reported in Dodge Co 31 May but no details were published.

Pectoral Sandpiper: There were two reports of rather early migrants: one westerly bird was with Killdeer in the central Platte River Valley 16 Mar (AF) and 2 were in Sarpy Co 18 Mar (EB). Early dates are Apr 4-13. Rare in the west in spring, one was in Sheridan Co 21 May (LE); there are only 32 spring records west of Phelps Co.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Western Sandpiper: None were reported of this rare statewide spring migrant.

Short-billed Dowitcher: All of the 13 reports were in May as expected for this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: One at Wood Duck WMA, Stanton Co, 26-27 May (SSm, MB) may have been a late migrant or possible breeder. Rather early for a presumed non-wintering location was one in Sarpy Co 15 Mar (L&BP). Previous early dates for presumed non-wintering locations were Mar 14-18.

American Woodcock: A bit westerly was one in Chapman, Merrick Co, 27 Mar (SM).

Wilson's Phalarope: Reports were routine of this abundant central and western spring migrant, common east.

Red-necked Phalarope: Rare in the east in spring, 1-2 were at WSW 18-21 May (MW photo, TG), possibly the same birds that were at LSWNC 28 May (MW).

Bonaparte's Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Franklin's Gull: The 20,000+ at LSWNC 22 Apr (MW) was a record spring count for the state. There were 10,000 still present 24 Apr (MW). There is one estimate of "tens of thousands" previously and several mentions in the literature of "thousands", however. Of five such high count estimates, all are in the brief period 15-24 Apr.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

California Gull: The only report was of an ad in Lincoln Co 4 Mar (TJW); it may have been wintering nearby or an early migrant. Lowest numbers of this species occur in late Feb-early Mar in Nebraska.

Herring Gull: Reports were routine of this locally abundant statewide spring migrant.

Thayer's Gull: About 20 individuals were reported statewide through 23 Apr (m. ob.), the last an ad at LM (JGJ). The 8 at LM 1 Mar (NA) was a record spring (after 1 Mar) count, and the ad at LM 23 Apr (JGJ) tied the second-latest spring date.

Iceland Gull: The only reports were of a very pale individual, probably a pale juvenile, at BOL 1-22 Mar (NA photo, MW photo, m. ob.), and a second-cycle bird there 17-19 Mar (NA, LE). These are the 8th and 9th documented spring records, 29th and 30th for the state overall.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: There were about 12 individuals reported during the period, continuing the increasing number of occurrences of this uncommon statewide spring migrant. Including the 7 early spring migrants cited in the Winter Report, the spring total was an impressive 19 individuals. An ad at LM 18 May (JGJ) provided only the second May record for the state. Last dates are 23-30 Apr.

Slaty-backed Gull: A gull photographed at BOL 1 and 17 Mar was thought to be suggestive of a first cycle Slaty-backed Gull (NA). This species has not been confirmed on the Nebraska list, and is very difficult to conclusively separate from similar first cycle gulls such as the "Cook Inlet Gull", a hybrid Glaucous-winged x Herring Gull, which has occurred in Nebraska and eastern Colorado. The photos were submitted to several experts on Slaty-backed Gull identification, and comments received included "looks good but can't totally eliminate Cook Inlet (gwgu X hegu)" (PP), and "would stand out amongst SBG in korea" (NM). Barring DNA testing, it might not be possible to confirm the presence of a first cycle Slaty-backed Gull in Nebraska. A similar bird was at LM 5 Mar (NA), which supports the likelihood that these birds were indeed Cook Inlet Gulls.

Glaucous Gull: As with the previous species, good numbers were reported statewide, all but 2 birds in first cycle plumage; in all, 10 individuals were reported through 20 Apr, the last at LM (JGJ), including the 2 ads at Sherman Res, Sherman Co, 6 Mar (JGJ). The 20 Apr date is 5th-latest on record for spring; last expected dates are 11-13 Apr.

Great Black-backed Gull: This species also is occurring more frequently in Nebraska in recent years. Five were reported: a first cycle at LM 26 Feb (see Winter Report) through 5 Mar (SJD, m. ob.), another at Sherman Res, Sherman Co, 1 Mar (MB, DH), a 2nd cycle there 8 Mar (LR, RH), another 2nd cycle at HCR 23 Mar (JGJ), and a first cycle at L Bennington, Douglas Co, 27-29 Mar (JR, SMa, JGJ). These are the 11th-15th spring records; there are now 39 records in all for the state.

Least Tern: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern and central spring migrant, rare west.

Caspian Tern: Five at BOL 23 Apr (RSt, EJ) were rather early; there are 3 prior records for 22 Apr.

Black Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Common Tern: Only 3 were reported of this uncommon migrant: one at LO 18 May (JGJ), two near North Platte 21 May (TJW), and one in Lincoln 28 May (MW).

Arctic Tern: A remarkable record, not only for its rarity, but for the habitat it was using, was of one photographed at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, 31 May (JGJ) and seen again later the same day (MW). This is the 5th record for Nebraska, 3 in spring, 16 May-11 Jun, and 2 in fall, 20 Sep-1 Oct. (See photo in NBR Vol. 83 No. 1, page 23.)

Forster's Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: In several cases, individuals and pairs return each spring to sites they attended in previous years. A rural Dawson Co location has hosted a pair since spring of 2012 (J&JH); another regular site is the Ochsner yard in Ogallala, where a pair was present in 2013 and another was there 30 Apr this year (JO). Intriguingly, 2 hung around the Burger King in North Platte from 12 Apr (GW, JGJ). They had apparently been present at least in 2014 and may have nested this year (TJW). Two nestings were reported: one on the University of Nebraska-Kearney campus beginning 13 Mar and incubating by 18 Mar (RH, LR), and the other at Culbertson, where one arrived 16 Apr and a pair was nesting by 31 May (DA fide JGJ). Finally, there were 2 additional singles reported: 26 Apr in Seward (JG), and 7 May in Lincoln (BWe).

Mourning Dove: Good spring counts were 80 at both LO 30 Apr (MW, KH) and in Kimball Co 20 May (CWo). High count is 83.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central spring migrant, uncommon west.

Black-billed Cuckoo: The 3 reports were about the norm for recent springs. Singles were at FF 24 May (BP), Grove L WMA, Antelope Co, 26 May (MB), and a "possible" at FF 29 May (JR).

Barn Owl: There were a surprising 10 reports, one of an active nest, the others of single birds. The active nest was in a road cut in Chase Co 17 May (JGJ), and the other 9 reports (m. ob.) were statewide beginning 4 Apr in Seward Co (MLa).

Eastern Screech-Owl: A nest box in the observer's Dixon Co yard that had hosted breeding screech owls in 2012 had a juv 29 May this spring (JJ). One was occupying a nest box in an Omaha yard by 3 Mar; at least one was in the area into Apr, and activities suggested a breeding attempt (SMa).

Great Horned Owl: Earliest nesting reported was 10 Mar in Bellevue (CNK) and 14 Mar in Scotts Bluff Co (RSg). Most incubation begins in mid- to late Feb.

Snowy Owl: In addition to the 4 winter reports, one came to light 27 Mar when seen by Roger Pehrson near Laurel and reported by his son John to Ed Brogie; it was first seen in the area by Bill Boese around 13 Mar (fide EBr, MB) and was seen by many through 1 Apr (RP fide SSc). This is the 6th-latest date on record for this species.

Burrowing Owl: One at possibly the easternmost regular site, Prairie Dog WPA, Kearney Co, 27 Mar (TMo) was rather early; there are 3 early dates 21 Mar. The 23 at CLNWR 27 Apr (TFu) was an excellent count; previous highs were 19-41.

Barred Owl: This species continues to expand its range slowly westward. The Little Blue River drainage has reports as far west as Nuckolls, Clay, and Adams Co, but Barred Owl may only be established in Jefferson and Thayer Cos; 2 were east of Hubbell, Thayer Co, along Rose Creek, a southwestern tributary of the Little Blue River, 23 Mar (JGJ), and singles were at each of 2 Jefferson Co locations 2 Mar (RSt). More recently, records are accumulating in the Republican River Valley; one at Bloomington, Franklin Co, 23 Mar (JGJ) is farthest west to date, fewer than 10 miles from the excellent riparian forests in Harlan Co. One near Dannebrog, Howard Co, 1 Mar (MB, DH) was at the west edge of the range in the Platte River Valley. One was giving the classic "who cooks for you" call at the Valentine City Park, 17 May (RSt), almost 200 miles west of the western edge of the current range, which is in the vicinity of Niobrara.

Long-eared Owl: Two reports of breeding were received; egg fragments were found 27 Apr below a nest that was found 4 Apr in Blaine Co (fide TEL), and a nest in Kimball Co that was first seen 12 May fledged 2-3 young 17 May (LS, KD, AK).

Short-eared Owl: This species tends to be nomadic in winter rather than migratory; two reports from the southeast were likely of such birds: 6 Mar in Lancaster Co (EMC) and 1 Apr in Douglas Co (JDa). Later reports were from probable breeding locations: 10 Apr in Dawes Co (WM), 27 Apr in Lincoln Co (TJW), 17 and 23 May in Kimball Co (2; KD, LE), and 26 Apr in Sioux Co (2; MMc).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: There have been reports for a few years now during winter of this species in the cedar canyons in southeastern Lincoln Co, although the owls have probably always wintered there; this year counts on 6 Mar yielded a total of 6 birds (TJW). Last calls are usually heard in Mar; this year one heard 2 Apr was the "latest I have heard" (LDe). Breeding may occur there but has not been confirmed. One calling in a canyon near Whiteclay, Sheridan Co, 18 Mar (PMH) was wintering or migrating. The grandfather of saw-whet owl breeding in Nebraska, Wayne Mollhoff, reports that 5 of the 6 chicks at the Wildcat Hills, Scotts Bluff Co, nest box were banded 14 May (JT, KD); the 6th chick had fledged. Another group of 5 chicks in West Ash Canyon, Dawes Co, was banded 26 May (WM, JT), and a third breeding location was implied as a biologist photographed 3 fledged young 2 miles south of Chadron SP 18 May (fide WM). Following a 2010 survey by Bart Bly that estimated 48 breeding pairs in the west, Wayne Mollhoff began setting out nest boxes. It is amazing but perhaps not surprising that attention given to a species that had no breeding records in the state until 2014 has yielded such great results!

Common Nighthawk: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

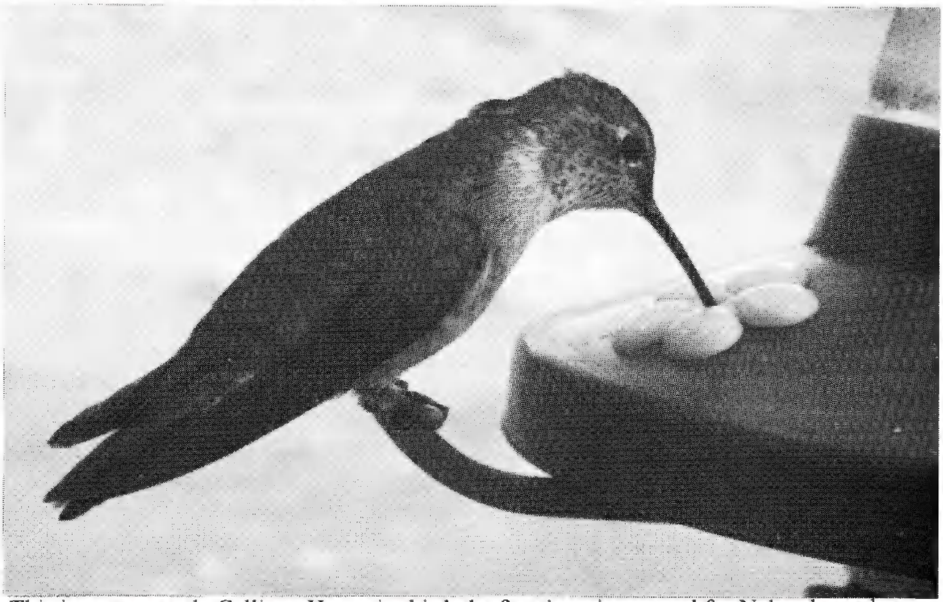
Common Poorwill: One in Moran Canyon, Lincoln Co, 29 Apr (LDe) was rather early; early dates are 22-25 Apr. None were reported farther east.

Chuck-will's-widow: The only reports were from known locations, although the Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, location hosts only a few birds; one was there 1 May (LE). The 1 May date is rather early; early dates are 23-29 Apr. The other report was from ICSP 18 May (TG), where there is a sizeable population.

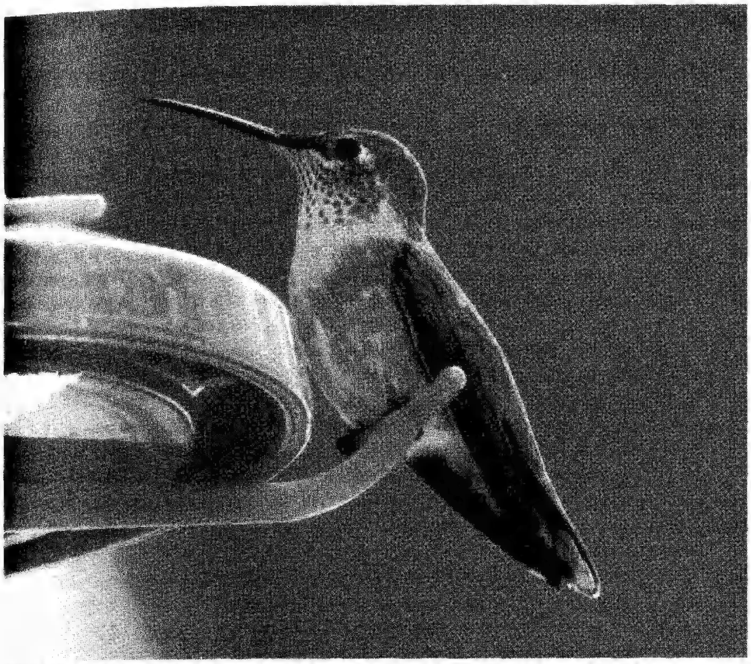
Eastern Whip-poor-will: Reports were routine of this common eastern spring migrant.

Chimney Swift: The 15 in Custer Co 25 Apr (TH) were rather early; arrival in that part of the state is in mid-Apr. The 40 in Otoe Co 20 May (SQ) was a good spring tally; high is 118.

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine of this fairly common western Panhandle spring migrant.



This immature male Calliope Hummingbird, the fourth spring record for Nebraska and first since 1994, was photographed by Juanita Whittecar in eastern Dawes County 25 May 2015.



This female Broad-tailed Hummingbird appeared in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 31 May, photographed by Kathy DeLara. It is the 3rd spring record of this species for Nebraska. The pointed outer primary can be seen clearly.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Westerly reports are increasing; this spring one was at Valentine City Park 17 May (TJW). There are 10 documented records from Valentine and Lincoln Co westward.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: Only the 2nd and 3rd spring records for the species were fems that appeared in a southeastern Dawes Co yard 25 May (JWh) and a Scotts Bluff Co yard 31 May (KD photo). The southeastern Dawes Co bird was in the same yard that a fem was in last year (JWh).

Calliope Hummingbird: Other than Ruby-throated, hummingbirds generally do not occur in Nebraska in spring, but the last few years have seen a small increase in records of Broad-tailed, Calliope, and Black-chinned. Surprisingly, two Calliope Hummingbirds were reported this spring, the 3rd and 4th such records and first since 1994. An ad fem was photographed at Creighton 18 May (CT fide MB), and an apparent imm male was photographed in southeastern Dawes Co 25 May (JWh).

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Lewis's Woodpecker: None were reported of this uncommon western spring migrant.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Two observers noted that this species is not often encountered mid-city; one in an Omaha yard 3 May was only the second there in 30 years (NR), and another in a Lincoln yard was "unusual" (MP). Similar sentiments have been expressed by another Omaha observer (JR).

Red-bellied Woodpecker: 1-2 returned 1 Mar to a Scotts Bluff Co yard where they were present last year but had been absent for "a couple months" prior to 1 Mar; at least one was in the yard through 22 May (KD). Usually they are not seen during winter in the west; it is not known where they go or how far, although there is evidence that the species vacates northerly parts of its range during severe winters ("Birds of North America Online"). Red-bellied Woodpeckers first appeared in the DeLara yard in 2010 and bred in 2012, the first Panhandle breeding record.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Westerly, where rare in spring, and early was a juv in Dundy Co 1 Mar (MB); the nearby Panhandle has 12 spring records starting 7 Mar. Another westerly single was at McCook 20 Mar (JGJ).

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common eastern, less common western, resident.

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Pileated Woodpecker: Reports continue from the southwest edge of the slowly-expanding range: 2 were at Flathead WMA, Jefferson Co, 1 May (JGJ). The many additional reports were scattered along the Missouri River Valley north to Washington Co, and westward near the Kansas border, the Nebraska range now occupied by this species (m. ob.). Evidence suggests that FF may hold 3 pairs; Rick Schmid suggested 3 areas of FF where most sightings occur, and these likely correspond to three territories: Hidden L, Missouri/Walking Club trails, and Riverview Boardwalk.

American Kestrel: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Merlin: Reports were routine of this uncommon western and central spring migrant, rare east.

Peregrine Falcon: One over southwest Dixon Co 25 Mar (JJ) was rather early; early dates are 22-24 Mar. One at LM 19 May (JGJ) was rather late; late dates are 24-27 May. There were numerous reports from the Omaha and Lincoln areas, where resident birds probably account for most sightings.

Prairie Falcon: Reports were routine of this fairly common regular winter visitor, spring migrant and summer resident west, and rare winter visitor east.

Gyrfalcon: Of less than annual occurrence in the state, there was one report this season: one in Boyd Co 3 Apr (MB, DH). This is the first record for Apr; last dates for wintering birds are 3 Mar (twice), and there is a single May record.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Rather early was one at BOL 2 May (MW), and another at FF 3 May (DL, BFH, BP, BSt); early dates are 29 Apr-2 May. This species is a rare spring migrant in the Panhandle; one was in Dawes Co 17 May (SM). Westerly were 2 at Smith Falls SP, Cherry Co, 31 May (CRi).

Western Wood-Pewee: This species summers regularly in small numbers east to the Valentine area, but a calling bird was unexpected as far east as Grove L Hatchery, Antelope Co, 23 May (GSm). It is only the third spring report for the east, although the two prior are undocumented.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: There are a few scattered westerly records to Keith, Lincoln, and Custer Cos, but this spring there was a surprising number reported: one was in Lincoln Co 27 May (TJW), singles were at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 16 May (TJW), in FNNWR the same day (GR, BP), and one was at Smith Falls SP, Cherry Co, 31 May (CRi).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: There were 2 well-documented reports: singles were at Towl Park, Omaha, 16 May (JR) and Walnut Grove Park, Omaha, 22-23 May (SMa, MW).

Acadian Flycatcher: The two strongholds for this species are ICSP, where best count was 7 on 15 May (SSc), and FF, where 4 were found 30 May (JR). The only report away from these locations was of one at SCP 18 May (JSS).

Alder Flycatcher: This species migrates through east and central Nebraska; westernmost were singles at VNWR 16 May (BP, SQ, GR) and FNNWR 24 May (CRi).

Willow Flycatcher: One at SCP 4 May (JSS) was rather early; early dates in the east are May 2 (three times).

Least Flycatcher: The 28 in Johnson Co 9 May (JGJ) looks like a good tally, but high counts are 50-54.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: The 4 reports were from Scotts Bluff and Sioux Cos, none at known breeding locations, 13-31 May (AK, EJo, KD). Migrants are rarely reported; these are the 21st-24th reports.

Eastern Phoebe: One at Parks, Dundy Co, 20 Mar (JGJ) was rather early that far west. The 11 counted at PL 30 Mar (TG) was a good count; highs are 36-50.

Say's Phoebe: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant west, uncommon central.

Great Crested Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this common spring migrant east and central, uncommon west.

Couch's Kingbird: A major surprise was a single bird at FF 9 May that was identified by plumage and calls as this species (GR, BP, JR). If accepted by the NOURC, this would be Nebraska's first record of this species.

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common western spring migrant.

Western Kingbird: One in Dawes Co 21 Apr (JGJ) was the earliest documented record.

Eastern Kingbird: One at HCR 25 Mar (SQ, details) was only the 4th record for Mar, all 24-31 Mar.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: This species now occurs each year in southern Nebraska; this spring there were 3 reported: singles in Thayer and Webster Cos 1 May (JGJ), and in western Douglas Co 9 May (fide JGJ).

Loggerhead Shrike: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant and summer resident.

Northern Shrike: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide winter visitor and spring migrant.

Bell's Vireo: One at FRSHP 20 May (RW) was rather early; early dates in the wes are 11-19 May.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Westerly were two apparently different singing birds a NNF, Halsey, 17 May (GR, BP). Reports away from the east are rare.

Plumbeous Vireo: Only 2 were reported of this uncommon Panhandle spring migrant: one was at Chadron SP 15 May (KF) and the other was in Scotts Bluff Co 18 May (AD).

Cassin's Vireo: One at LO 24 May (LE) was only the third spring record for Nebraska; all 3 are during the last week of May.

Blue-headed Vireo: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern spring migrant.

Warbling Vireo: Arrival was rather early. In the east, first reported were 3 at BOL 23 Apr (RSt); early dates in the east are 14-18 Apr. In the west, however, early dates are 1-2 May, but this spring there were 3 earlier arrivals: 26 Apr Ogallala (TFu), the same day at Clear Creek Marshes, Keith Co, (TFu), and 27 Apr at CLNWR (TFu).

Philadelphia Vireo: Only the 10th record away from the east was one at NNF, Halsey, 17 May (GR, BP).

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central spring migrant, uncommon west.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported of this fairly common western spring visitor.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant and resident.

Black-billed Magpie: The spring reports were from similar locations to those listed in the Winter Report, although observer comments were generally pessimistic. In Scotts Bluff Co, despite reports from several locations, including 9 birds at L Minatare 14 Mar (RSg), they were said to be "pretty scarce again" (AK), and a western Nebraska trip in mid-Apr yielded "more active Ferruginous Hawk nests than magpies" (JGJ). Sightings in the southwest were encouraging, with 4 sightings of 6 birds in Franklin and Hitchcock Cos 1 May (JGJ). LM numbers were low, only 2 sightings totaling 3 birds were reported (JGJ, LE). FRSHP continues to host a few birds; 7 were there 20 May (RW), and one was at NNF, McKelvie, 28 May (EJo). Away from these locations, magpies are scarce and localized, especially east of the area bounded roughly by Webster, Boone, and Thurston Cos; thus the 2 in Colfax Co 26 Apr (D&JP) were a good find, and there is still a small group near Norfolk (see Winter Report).

American Crow: Good counts of 405 on 11 Mar and 328 the next day in Lincoln Co (TJW) indicate peak spring migration; high counts are 480-2490, all in the period 6-23 Mar.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant and common summer resident.

Purple Martin: Valentine and VNWR appear to be the westernmost sites for this species in the north, but numbers must be low; only the 3rd and 4th reports from there were of 1-3 at VNWR 9-18 May (CRi) and one at Valentine City Park 16 May (SQ). Up to 15 were at Benkelman 29 Apr-15 May (DM, MW, KH), where the species has been established for a few years, and at Broken Bow, where 2 were seen 26 Apr (LE).

Tree Swallow: One at PP 20 Mar (LPl) was rather early; early dates are Mar 14-15.

Violet-green Swallow: An exciting find for many NOU members were easterly birds at Valentine Fish Hatchery 16-17 May (TJW, DL, RW, m. ob.); another was at FNNWR 19 May (RW). There is a prior report for Valentine 3 Jun 2013, but no records of the species farther east than FNNWR.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Rather early were singles at PL 1 Apr (LE) and Shoemaker Marsh, Lincoln, 2 Apr (LE). Early dates were 30 Mar-2 Apr.

Bank Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Cliff Swallow: One at Jack Sinn 8 Apr (AG) was rather early; early dates are Apr 4-6. The 1800 estimated at LO 30 Apr (MW, KH) was an excellent tally; high spring counts are 2000-3500.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide resident.

Mountain Chickadee: One that appeared in the DeLara yard 8 Feb was still present 22 Mar (KD); the only other report was of one in a south Scotts Bluff Co yard 18 Apr (AK). This species has appeared in small numbers for the last few years, but only in Scotts Bluff Co, suggesting movement down the North Platte River Valley from Wyoming.

Tufted Titmouse: This species has a surprisingly restricted range in Nebraska and has shown little propensity for expansion away from mature forest in Missouri River counties plus Johnson and Pawnee Cos, except possibly for a few scattered reports in Gage and Jefferson Cos in recent years. Even in Lancaster Co, the species struggles to be reported annually (LE, MW).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Numbers were generally average or below-average statewide, with best single-location count 5 at a Douglas Co spot (TFi). Departure times from winter locations were, as expected, during May.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this common northwestern, central, and eastern resident, uncommon winter visitor elsewhere.

Pygmy Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this fairly common northwestern resident.

Brown Creeper: One along Highway 97 near the Snake River, Cherry Co, 16 May (TJW) may have been at a breeding site; there is a Jun report from nearby Snake River Campground. Reports 23 Apr from Neale Woods, Douglas Co, (JR) and FF (EA) may have been of rather late winter visitors, or possibly breeders. Last dates are 27 Apr-May 2 at non-breeding locations. Breeding does occur at FF, but not as yet at Neale Woods.

Rock Wren: Reports were routine of this common westerly spring migrant.

House Wren: One at Bellevue 5 Apr (AG, BG) was rather early; there are only 4 earlier dates in Apr and no documented records for Mar.

Winter Wren: A single bird in Dundy Co 14 Mar immediately raised the geographic possibility of Pacific Wren; however, the observer made a video recording of the bird including vocalizations, and it proved to be a Winter Wren (MB).

Sedge Wren: Reports were routine of this common eastern spring migrant; there are no documented records in the north-central and west.

Marsh Wren: One in Dundy Co singing the expected western-type song for that location (WF) probably wintered nearby, as the date is about a month earlier than usual early dates for migrants.

Carolina Wren: The majority of reports were, as expected, confined within southeast Nebraska from Cuming Co (25 Apr, LR, RH) to Jefferson Co (9 Mar, MUs; 11 Mar, CNK), but the usual outliers popped up: one was at HCR 25 Mar (SQ), where there is a persistent small population, and, most surprising, one was at Norden Bridge, Brown Co, 16 Mar (AMa). There are about 4 prior records from north-central Nebraska. One was on a nest with 4 eggs at Homestead NM, Gage Co, 1 May (JBo).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: This species occurs in good numbers in most of the state except for the Sandhills; it is still rare in the north-central, but numbers are increasing along the Niobrara River west to Highway 16F. This spring there were 4 reports of 1-2 birds 15-31 May (TJW, WF, CRi).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Wintering is rare but does occur in the southeast; one that showed up in a Fremont yard 14 Feb remained until 6 Mar (GR), and another was in Omaha 4 Mar (DP). Early dates for migrants are 9-11 Mar.

Eastern Bluebird: One singing at Wildcat Hills SRA, Scotts Bluff Co, 7 Mar (KD), where it summers, is the earliest record for the Panhandle, with others 8, 11, 16, and 18 Mar and expected early dates 23-25 Mar. There are no Feb records for the Panhandle.

Mountain Bluebird: The 50 in Kimball Co just east of Pine Bluffs WY, 12 Mar (DHa) was a good count; high counts are 65-100. Defining the east edge of the spring migration range were one in Frontier Co 15 Mar (JMi), 15 in Dawson Co 15 Mar (D&JP), and 7 on a frozen pond in Custer Co 1 Mar (WF). Migrants arrive on the breeding range in late Feb.

Townsend's Solitaire: There were only 3 reports, far fewer than usual, and all of singles in the west: Kimball Co 19 Apr (WF), southern Garden Co 12 Mar (D&JP), and Scotts Bluff Co 14 Mar (KD, RSg).

Veery: This species is a rare spring migrant in the east and west, likely involving different subspecies, but there has been only one report from central Nebraska. This spring, there were a surprising 5 reports from northeast Cherry Co 18-31 May involving 8 individuals identified by song (CRi). The only other report for the season was of a singing single at PRSP 12 May (RSt).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: This was an amazing year for this species; as one veteran observer stated: "I've seen more Gray-cheeked Thrushes this spring than any other I can remember" (JGJ). A total of some 26 individuals were reported 2-21 May, west to Hamilton Co, where one was seen 14 May (JGJ).

Swainson's Thrush: First arrivals were about a week earlier in the west, whereas data to date have shown the opposite. Rather early were 7 at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 23 Apr (LE) and one in Scotts Bluff Co 28 Apr (AD). Previous early dates in the north and west were 24-27 May. First reported in the east were 5 in Lancaster Co 2 May (RSt), although 10 were at HCR in the central 1 May (JGJ). Best counts were the 25-30 in FF 9 May (BP), and, in the west, 20+ at FRSHP 20 May (RW).

Hermit Thrush: There were 2 reports of early arrivers in the east: Otoe Co 22 Mar (JGJ) and Dodge Co 30 Mar (GR), where previous early dates were 26-29 Mar. This species is rare in the west, so westerly and rather early were one at Ash

Hollow SHP, Garden Co, 27 Mar (JGJ) and another in Dundy Co 29 Apr (KH). Previous early dates away from the east were 26-30 Mar.

Wood Thrush: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern spring migrant.

American Robin: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Gray Catbird: Reports were routine of this common eastern spring migrant, uncommon west.

Brown Thrasher: One in Scotts Bluff Co 24 Apr (AD) was rather early; early dates in the west are 19-24 Apr.

Northern Mockingbird: One in Pawnee Co 14 Mar (CNK) was rather early; early dates are 8-9 Mar.

European Starling: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

American Pipit: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Sprague's Pipit: The only report was of one rather late at FNNWR 16 May (PH, CNK, m. ob.); late dates are 18-23 May.

Cedar Waxwing: Migrant numbers peak in mid-Apr; 1575 were in Snell Canyon, Lincoln Co, 8 Apr (TJW), and "huge flocks" were in Hall Co 16 Apr (CNK).

Lapland Longspur: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: Five in Keya Paha Co 17 May (DH, KGo) were near the eastern edge of the Nebraska breeding range.

McCown's Longspur: Reports were routine of this fairly common western spring migrant.

Snow Bunting: The only report of this early-departing winter visitor was of a rather late bird in Brown Co 16 Mar (AMa); there are only 3 later spring dates, through 23 Mar.

Ovenbird: One at ICSP 27 Apr (SSc, JC, WRS) was rather early; early dates are 22-24 Apr.

Worm-eating Warbler: One in Lancaster Co 16 Apr (LPl) was the first in the state for several years. It was also rather early; early dates of the 50 or so total records for the state are 19-28 Apr.

Louisiana Waterthrush: Numbers of this species continue to increase in favored locations such as ICSP, PRSP, and FF. Careful studies at PRSP and ICSP are delineating territories: 5, including a photographed nest, at ICSP along rocky streams in the southern part of the park (SSc, JC, WRS), and 4 at PRSP along Stone Creek (SSc, JC). At ICSP, first sighting was 21 Apr, a nest was active 15 May, a juv was photographed 28 May, and 2 more juvs were seen 29 May (SSc, JC, WRS). At PRSP, first arrival was 4 Apr, 3 territories were established 3 May, and a 4th territory by 21 May (SSc, JC). There were numerous reports from FF from 6 apparently separate locations; evidence of nesting was seen 20 May in Mormon Hollow with an ad carrying food (RS), and multiple sightings in Handsome Hollow through 9 May suggest nesting there also (m. ob). Additional sightings at FF included 1-2 each in Mill Hollow (7 Apr; NR), Childs Hollow (20 May; SMa), at Gifford Rd at the railroad tracks (11 and 16 Apr; RS, ARy), and at the junction of Stream and Cottonwood Trails (5 May; RSt). Recent years have shown a few sightings westward; this spring one was at Homestead NM, Gage Co, 11 and 13 May (KF); the veteran observer had not found this species in that county previously. There are only 3 reports for spring and summer west of Gage Co. Nesting likely occurs at

Schramm SP, Cass Co, where one was present 9 May (D&JP), along Rock Creek in Neale Woods, Douglas Co, where one was found 16 Apr (NR), and at PSP, where one was seen 25 Apr (JGJ) and it or another was "on territory" 3 May (BFH). Two along a wooded creek on Bay Hills Golf Course, Cass Co, 30 Apr (KSc) were likely nesting given the date. The remaining sightings appear to have been of migrants or wandering birds: one at Armbrust Lane, southwest Sarpy Co, 9 May (D&JP), one at WP 6 May (RSt), and one in southeast Butler Co 28 Apr (MW, KH).

Northern Waterthrush: Rather early were singles at FF 20 Apr (JCr) and in Cass Co 24 Apr (KSc), and 2 were at FF 24 Apr (EB). Previous early dates were 20-23 Apr.

Golden-winged Warbler: About 10 individuals were reported 3-22 May, all in the east as expected (m. ob.). This is a good tally for this rare spring migrant; it has been reported in higher numbers in recent years. One at PRSP 3 May (DL, SSc) was rather early; previous early dates were 2-4 May.

Blue-winged Warbler: This species is less-than-annual in spring in Nebraska, with most reports from the east. This spring a good showing of 4 was reported, all singles: in Bellevue 3 May (CNK), in Lincoln 3 May (MVD), somewhat westerly in Hastings 5 May (PSa, details), and in FF 12 May (KGo, details).

Black-and-white Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Prothonotary Warbler: All but 2 of the reports were from FF, where nesting has occurred in nest boxes at Great Marsh the last few years; one was carrying nest material there 5 May (MCS). Arrival was 1 May (LE) and best count 3 on 23 May (JR, MW). The only reports away from FF were the observer's 100th yard bird in Bellevue 6 May (RBa) and one unexpected at WP 7 May (EJ). Reports away from the Missouri River Valley are few.

Tennessee Warbler: This spring added 2 reports to the previous 43 from the Panhandle: one was at FRSHP 20 May (RW) and 3 were in Sheridan Co 24 May (NV). There were several reports from the Valentine area during the NOU Spring Meeting 15-17 May (m. ob.).

Orange-crowned Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Nashville Warbler: This species is rare westerly. Perhaps unsurprising given the dense coverage by NOU members, 2 were found in Cherry Co 16 May: singles at FNNWR (BW) and Valentine City Park (BW).

Virginia's Warbler: There were 2 reported, only the 6th and 7th for spring, 12th and 13th overall. Singles were in Dundy Co 2 May (JGJ) and at Oliver Res, Kimball Co, 17 May (PD). Five of the spring reports are in the period 17-22 May, and five are since 2004.

Connecticut Warbler: There were 3 reports of this rare spring migrant: singles were at FF 19 (RS) and 27 (CNK) May and in Omaha 27 May (JR).

MacGillivray's Warbler: The only report of this often difficult-to-locate species was from Scotts Bluff Co 26 May (AD).

Mourning Warbler: This species is rare away from the east; there are only 3 Panhandle records. A westerly bird was seen by several NOU members at

Valentine City Park 16-17 May 2015 (m. ob.). All reports this spring were in the period 9-25 May (m. ob.) as expected.

Kentucky Warbler: Arrival was rather early, with a surprising 10 at ICSP 1 May (JR) and 2 at PRSP 3 May (SSc). Early dates are 28-29 Apr.

Common Yellowthroat: One in Lincoln Co 24 Apr (TJW) was rather early; early dates are 20-22 Apr.

Hooded Warbler: Only one was reported, down from the last few years, a single in Omaha 8 May (JR).

American Redstart: The 40 at FF 24 May (MW) was 2nd-highest spring tally on record, behind a count of 46 in Sowbelly Canyon at the opposite end of the state.

Cape May Warbler: In contrast with recent springs, there was only one report, that of a "possible" at FF 14 May (RS); although the veteran observer heard the bird he was unable to see it.

Cerulean Warbler: Two were reported, a typical spring for this rare spring migrant: singles were at PRSP 11 May (SM) and ICSP 15 May (SSc, WRS).

Northern Parula: The 17 at ICSP 1 May (JR) was a good count; high counts are in the range 17-25.

Magnolia Warbler: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern spring migrant, rare central.

Bay-breasted Warbler: None were reported of this rare eastern spring migrant.

Blackburnian Warbler: One was somewhat westerly in Antelope Co 23 May (GSm); this species is rare westward.

Yellow Warbler: The 50 at BOL 10 May (TG) was a good count; highs are 85-186.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: Rare westward, there were 2 reports: 2 were at NNF, Halsey, 21 May (LE), and 1-2 were reported by the NOU group from Valentine City Park 16-17 May (m. ob.).

Blackpoll Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern and central spring migrant, uncommon west.

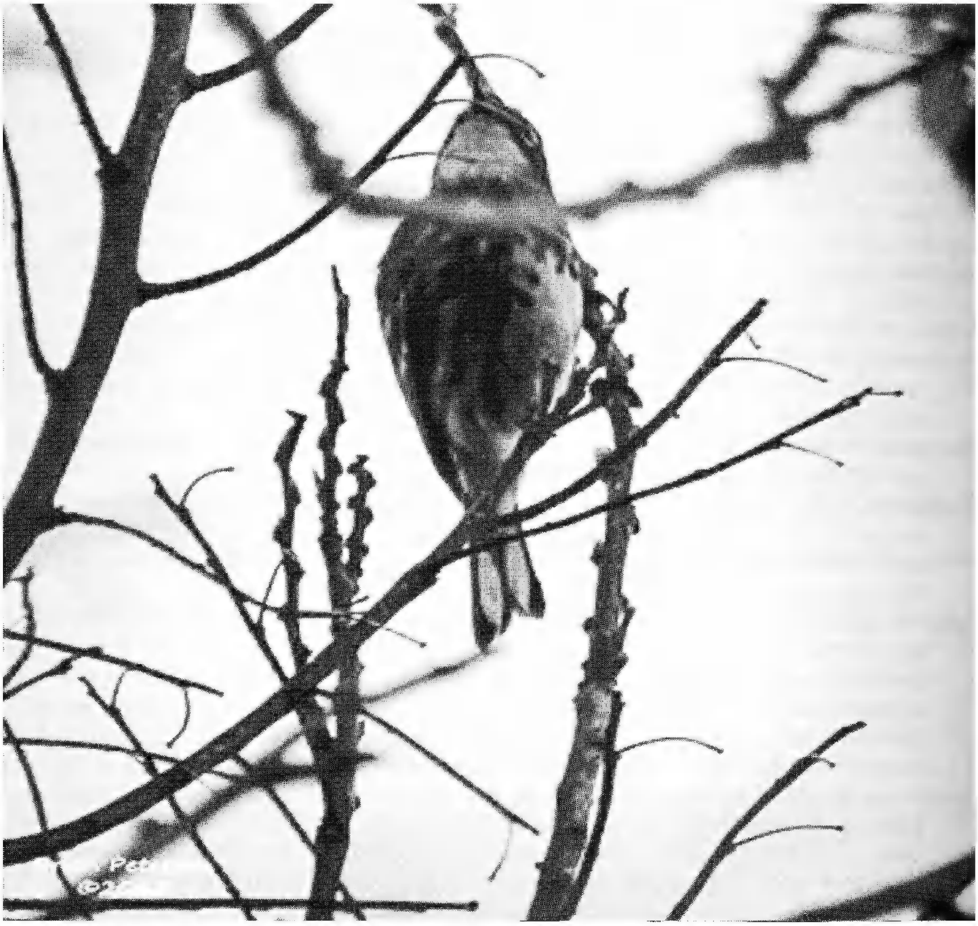
Black-throated Blue Warbler: None were reported of this less-than-annual statewide spring migrant. One in the 2014 Spring Report in Washington Co 17 May attributed to "JJ", Jan Johnson, was an error on my part. Jan did not report the bird and I cannot track the record.

Palm Warbler: One in Omaha 18 Apr (BP) was rather early; early dates are 14-16 Apr. The 5 at Offutt Air Force Base L, Sarpy Co, 5 May (JCr) was a good count; previous highs were 5-26. Most Palm Warblers in Nebraska are the western subspecies *Setophaga palmarum palmarum* and intergrades with eastern *S. p. hypochrysea*. There are few records of the latter, but one was in Seward 10 May (JG), only the 7th Nebraska report of this subspecies.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: A bird of the Audubon's/Myrtle group in Omaha 27 Apr (BP, photo) had a yellow throat indicative of Audubon's but surrounded by a narrow white fringe, suggesting that it had at least some Myrtle genes. There are 6 previous records in the east, and several from the central.

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: Until the last 3 winters, Feb reports were rare, indicating that over-wintering was rare. The winter of 2014-2015 added an unprecedented 16 records for Feb to the previous total of 20, and so early reports this spring are likely over-wintering birds: 3 at Schramm SP, Sarpy Co, 1 Mar (AC), and one at GPD 6 Mar (DT). The 3 in Dawson Co 11 Mar (TJW) and one at North Platte 12 Mar (TJW) may have been rather early migrants. Early dates when over-wintering (generally mid-Feb) sightings did not occur are 9 Mar (3 records).

Yellow-throated Warbler: One at FF 7 Apr (AG) was 3rd-earliest on record. Previous early dates were 7-10 Apr. Best count was the 6, all singing males, at FF 16 Apr (JR); there are 2 higher counts of 10 and 7, both at FF. The only reports away from FF were of one singing at ICSP 21 Apr (SSc, JC, WRS), one at NP Dodge Park, Douglas Co, 17 Apr (CNK), and 3 singing males at Krimlofsky Tract, southeast Washington Co, 1 May (MW).



This Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler, 7th record for the east, was photographed 27 Apr by Brian Peterson in Omaha.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Only 9 were reported, all in the east, 1-11 May (m. ob.), a typical total for spring migrants.

Canada Warbler: Only 3 were reported of this rare late spring migrant: singles were at FF 23 May (JR) and 25 May (MW), and in Omaha 25 May (JR).

Wilson's Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide spring migrant.

Yellow-breasted Chat: As expected, reports were from western and northern Nebraska, presumably of the western subspecies *Icteria virens auricollis*; in the north, easternmost was one in Boyd Co 29 May (LR, RH), but reports to the southeast are slowly increasing in recent years, suggesting southeastward expansion of the Nebraska population of *auricollis*. Of the 9 records of Yellow-breasted Chat in the east since 2009, 7 were in 2014 and 2015. This summer, one was in Stanton Co 21 May (WF), another in Platte Co 17 May (BP, GR), and one in Douglas Co 11 May (KGo). There are no Nebraska records cited on eBird for the eastern subspecies, *I. v. virens*, which appears to be extirpated in Nebraska.

Green-tailed Towhee: Only one was reported of this rare Panhandle migrant, one at WHNC 18 May (SM).

Spotted Towhee: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide spring migrant.

Eastern Towhee: Arrival in the southeast is in early Apr, and reports this spring fit this arrival timing. Westward, however, this species is rare, but in the last few years there have been several reports from Scotts Bluff Co of phenotypically pure birds, including songs. It is interesting that these birds are reported at the same time that Spotted Towhees reappear on their Panhandle breeding range, usually about a month later than southeastern Easterns arrive. It is tempting to consider these later migration dates as evidence that these birds are genetic introgressants despite exhibiting pure Eastern Towhee phenotypes.

Cassin's Sparrow: None were reported of this rare and erratic southwestern summer resident; arrival is in late May.

American Tree Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Chipping Sparrow: One trilling in Omaha 20 Mar (JGr) was rather early; previous early dates were 22-24 Mar.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide spring migrant.

Brewer's Sparrow: The only report of this uncommon western sage specialist was of 2 along Henry Road, Sioux Co, 21 May (RW), an expected location.

Field Sparrow: This species is rare in spring in the Panhandle, with only 20 such reports; western birds are mostly of a different subspecies than those in the rest of the state. This spring, however, there were 4 Panhandle reports: in Garden Co, one was near Oshkosh 26 Apr (TFu) and 2 were at Ash Hollow SHP 16 May (KF), 4 were in Scotts Bluff Co 11 May (JCh), and one was in Sioux Co 14 May (KF). One in Johnson Co 22 Mar (JGJ) was rather early; early dates are 20 Mar (3 records).

Vesper Sparrow: Arrival was rather early, with singles in Lancaster Co 3 Apr (TG) and in Phelps Co 9 Apr (AF). Previous early dates were 4-9 Mar.

Lark Sparrow: The 120 at Ft. Robinson SRA, Dawes Co, 20 May (RW) was a good count; the only higher spring counts are 155 and 900.

Lark Bunting: Reports were routine of this abundant spring migrant west, uncommon north.

Savannah Sparrow: Rather late for the south and east were 2 in Hall Co 24 May (CCh, SPf) and one in Douglas Co 22 May (SMa). By late May most reports are from the north. Late dates are 25-29 May.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One in Loup Co "singing for an hour" 12 Apr (RSt) was rather early in the north; arrival in the west is about a month later than in the east (27 Apr -1 May west, 26-31 Mar east). Best count was the 50 on 30 Apr just north of North Platte (MW, KH); there are 2 higher counts, both in Hall Co, of 73 and 157.

Henslow's Sparrow: The only report was of 4 on 12 May at a regular location (where habitat has not been disturbed) at Burchard SRA, Pawnee Co (KF).

Le Conte's Sparrow: None were reported of this fairly common eastern spring migrant, uncommon central.

Nelson's Sparrow: The only reports of this late-migrating species were of one in Stanton Co 27 May (MB) and one at Jack Sinn 30 May (MW). Surprisingly, these are only the 11th and 12th spring records overall; this species is much easier to find in fall.

Fox Sparrow: The 21 at PP 30 Mar (JLL) was a good count; high counts are 22-25. Singles at BOL 1 Mar (LE), FF 2 Mar (RS), and PP 6 Mar (LE) may have wintered; there were numerous reports through winter 2014-2015 in the southeast.

Song Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common eastern migrant, uncommon west.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common eastern migrant, uncommon west.

Swamp Sparrow: This species generally takes up territories later than its congenerics; birds were "finally" on territory near North Platte 6 May (TJW).

White-throated Sparrow: Rare in the west in spring, the only such report was of one at FRSHP 20 May (RW, photo).

Harris's Sparrow: Rare in the Panhandle, there were two reports: singles were in Kimball Co 20 May (CWo, photo), and Scotts Bluff Co 10 May (KD).

White-crowned Sparrow: One in Dodge Co 31 May (GR) was rather late; late dates are 31 May-3 Jun. Dark-lored birds in Nebraska that migrate through the state and occasionally winter are thought to be eastern *Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*; the Rocky Mountain breeder *Z. l. oriantha* moves south in winter and is unlikely to occur in Nebraska. A dark-lored bird in Omaha 10 May was thought "most likely an intergrade" (SMa).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported of this rare western spring migrant and uncommon western summer resident.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: Two "Dark-eyed Juncos" at Oglala National Grasslands, Sioux Co, (EJo) were likely this form, given the habitat, and rather late; late dates for this form are 2-5 Jun.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: This form is rare in the east: the 2 reports were of one in Nebraska City 9-21 Mar (SQ) and 2 at Schramm SP, Sarpy Co, 21 Mar (RW).

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: None were reported of this common western spring migrant.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: This form of Slate-colored Junco is regular in the east, albeit often difficult to identify; there were these reports: 1-2 were in an Omaha yard 11-15 Mar (SMa), 1-2 were at PRSP 25-26 Mar (SMa), and 2 were at Schramm SP, Sarpy Co, 21 Mar (RW).

Dark-eyed (Gray-headed) Junco: This less-than-annual winter visitor was reported once this spring: one was in the Lincoln Co cedar canyons 16 Apr (LDe, photo). This is the 16th documented spring record, despite about 55 reports for the state.

Summer Tanager: This species has been in expansion mode in recent years, mostly in the Missouri River counties, but a pair in WP 10 May (MW) and a male there 18 May (LE) suggest expansion into Lancaster Co. Westerly but not unexpected was a fem in Keith Co 24 May (LE); there are several spring migration Panhandle reports.

Scarlet Tanager: There were several rather early records; previous early dates were 25-26 Apr. One in Lancaster Co 18 Apr (JSS, details) tied the 2nd-earliest date on record, singles were at PRSP 26 Apr (TJW) and on the same day at WP (JSS), and 2 were at ICSP 29 Apr (SSc). There has been only one report west of Brown Co in the Niobrara River Valley since 1959, that east of Valentine, and so one heard singing at FNNWR 17 May (TJW) was significant. There are several spring reports west to the Panhandle, but these are less-than-annual; thus of interest was one found dead after a snowstorm in Scotts Bluff Co 11 May (AD, photo).

Western Tanager: Reports were routine of this uncommon western spring migrant.

Northern Cardinal: Reports were from 2 locations in Scotts Bluff Co; the DeLara yard, where a pair was present 16 May (KD), and "across the North Platte River from the Trail's West YMCA camp" 2 May (AK). This species has been present in Scotts Bluff Co in small numbers in a few locations near the North Platte River for a few years; breeding was first noted in 1994, but the population has expanded very slowly.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: This is a regular-but-rare spring migrant as far west as the Panhandle; singles were there 23 May (AK) and 31 May (KD). Also westerly were singles at FNNWR 16 May (BP, SQ, GR) and in Custer Co 13 May (WF).

Black-headed Grosbeak: Hybrids and various back-crosses occur in much of central Nebraska; one such was in Howard Co 3 May (JGJ). A *Pheucticus* grosbeak in an Ogallala yard 22 Mar feeding on suet (JO, details) was likely this species; Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are not known to overwinter in Nebraska, but Black-headed Grosbeaks have wintered a few times east of their breeding range.

Blue Grosbeak: There was good count of 11, mostly pairs, along a few miles of road in Chat Canyon, north-central Cherry Co, 31 May 2015 (CRi).

Lazuli Bunting: As has become the norm in recent years, there were several reports from the east; no fewer than 11 were found 7-27 May (m. ob.). There have been 41 reported in spring in the years 2008-2015. Hybrids with Indigo Bunting are not uncommon, especially the "white-breasted Indigo" type; singles of this type were in Scotts Bluff Co 20 May (AD) and 23 May (AK).

Indigo Bunting: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident, uncommon in the Panhandle.

Dickcissel: Reports were routine of this common eastern summer resident, less common and more erratic westward and rare in the Panhandle.

Bobolink: Earliest documented record by 6 days was a male in Madison Co 16 Apr (LD); previous earliest was a banded male recaptured in Hall Co 20 Apr 2005. Previous early expected dates were 28-30 Apr, thus one in Douglas Co 27 Apr (TF) was rather early. There are also 4 undocumented reports 21-24 Apr.

Red-winged Blackbird: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide spring migrant.

Eastern Meadowlark: Reports were routine for this common eastern spring migrant, uncommon and patchily-distributed westward.

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring migrant.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring migrant.

Rusty Blackbird: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern spring migrant, less-than-annual in the west.

Brewer's Blackbird: One in Dundy Co 8 Mar (WF) was early for that westerly location; farther west in the Panhandle, early spring dates are 22-31 Mar.

Common Grackle: The 3000 at LSWNC 13 Apr (MW) was an excellent tally, 2nd all-time only to a count of 11,222 in 2005. Strangely, the 3 highest spring counts are all in Lancaster Co.

Great-tailed Grackle: The 15 in Gothenburg 1 Mar (BP) were early, although wintering has occurred in North Platte, and so these birds may have wintered nearby. Non-wintering early dates are 27 Feb-1 Mar.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Arrival in the Panhandle is much later than in the east; early dates in the west are 9 Apr (3 records) and in the east for non-wintering birds 13-20 Feb. This spring, earliest reported in the Panhandle were 2 on 29 Apr (MW, KH). The 500 on 24 Apr in Lancaster Co (MW) was a good count; highs are 518-750.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine for this common statewide spring migrant.

Bullock's Oriole: Rather early was a pair in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 3 May (KD); early dates are 29 Apr-2 May. Two male hybrids were in the same Scotts Bluff Co yard 15-16 May, "typical for the yard" (KD). East of the Panhandle, reports are few; a male in Keith Co 16 May (KF) is only the 10th such on record. Six reports in the LM area are easternmost.

Baltimore Oriole: One in Omaha 18 Apr (JR) was rather early; early dates are 12-15 Apr.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported of this rare western winter visitor. Last dates are 20 Mar-2 Apr.

House Finch: A nest with 4 eggs was in Lincoln 26 Apr (TEL), and, at FF 1 May "I … found a female House Finch sitting on an old Barn Swallow nest obviously incubating eggs. The Barn Swallows have returned and are not happy with the new tenant." (RS).

Purple Finch: Rare in the Panhandle, 2 were in southern Scotts Bluff Co 3 Apr (AK). Two in Red Willow Co 11 May (CLi) were rather late; last dates are 11-13 May.

Cassin's Finch: The good numbers reported in winter at WHNC continued, although only one remained as late as 23 May (KD photo). This is only the 2nd May record, although there are 2-3 summer records. Twenty continued in a southern Scotts Bluff Co yard until only one remained 1 Apr (AK), and 2 were in a Gering yard 19 Mar (RSg). Most surprising was an easterly male at LM 5 Apr (J&GB, photo); the 5 records east of the Panhandle are from the LM area.

Red Crossbill: After only one winter report, that in Lincoln Co, at least a few were at the WHNC feeders this spring, but only during 14-23 May (KD, AK), and then the best count was only 11, on 22 May (LE). Norfolk, in the east, had more: a single was at a feeder there 12 May (SB) and 20 were at the Norfolk Cem 20 May (LE). Also easterly were 4 at a Doniphan feeder 22 Mar (JLL). The only other reports were of 2 at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder 26-28 Apr (AD), 2 at Ft. Robinson SRA, Dawes Co, 17 May (SM), and some rapid transit by the latter observer found 2 in Cherry Co the same day (SM). Strangely, all but one of the above reports were in the period 26 Apr-23 May; these are probably post-breeding wanderers.

Common Redpoll: Continuing the low number of winter reports, there were only two reports this spring: one was at a Scotts Bluff Co feeder 2-4 Apr (KD), and 2 were at a Halsey feeder 26 Mar (fide RH).

Pine Siskin: Good numbers showed statewide; the 250 at WHNC 7 Mar (KD) was the highest tally reported, second on record only to 300 in Keith Co in 1982.

Lesser Goldfinch: Third-earliest on record was a black-backed male at LM 1 Apr (J&GB photo). This species is rapidly increasing its numbers, although almost all records are still from the Panhandle.

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant and summer resident.

Evening Grosbeak: From the peak count of 15 wintering birds at WHNC, 9 were counted 13 Mar (AVe), and a lone fem held out until 23 May (LE, KD). This latter date is rather late; last dates are 24-29 May in the west. Elsewhere there were sightings east to Thomas Co, where 5 were at the entrance to NNF, Halsey, 14 Mar (D&JP), and Blaine Co, where 2 were at a feeder in Halsey (fide RH). The LM area hosted one at a feeder 5 Apr (J&GB) and 2 at LO 30 Apr (MW, KH, photos).

House Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

NOU Spring Field Days and Annual Meeting
Valentine, May 15-17, 2015

by Janis Paseka

The annual meeting of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union was held in Valentine on May 15 - 17, 2015, and ably organized by Dave Heidt and Betty Grenon. Although muddy roads from a Friday night storm prevented travel to several planned field trip destinations on Saturday and rain cut short field trips on Sunday morning, the 58 attendees were able to locate and identify 180 species. Most of the birding took place in Cherry County, and many birders commented happily on the good number of species they were able to add to their Cherry Co. lists.

On Friday evening Wayne Mollhoff told the group about the Northern Saw-whet Owl nest box project he has been working on since 2012. He now has 35 nest boxes out, and two of the boxes have been used so far, both by Saw-whets and by Eastern Screech-Owls. Screech-Owls feed their young almost exclusively on birds, but Saw-whet chicks are fed a variety of prey, including mice and voles. Wayne and Jerry Toll banded Saw-whet chicks at one of the boxes this past week.

On Saturday evening, Shelly Kelly from the non-profit Sandhills Task Force spoke to the group about their attempts to sustain ranching operations while at the same time supporting native plant and animal communities. The Nebraska Sandhills region is the largest contiguous grassland in North America, encompassing more than 19,000 square miles. The Task Force projects provide financial and technical assistance to establish rotational grazing systems, restore wetlands and eradicate invasive species for the benefit of both ranch operations and wildlife.

Field trips on Saturday and on Sunday morning were led by Clem Klaphake, Wayne Mollhoff, Dave Heidt and Don and Janis Paseka. Destinations included the Niobrara River, Merritt Reservoir, Ballards Marsh WMA, Valentine City Park, Valentine State Fish Hatchery, Valentine NWR, and Ft. Niobrara NWR.

Crowd-pleasing species included the Whimbrel (Merritt Res.), American Bittern (Valentine NWR), Violet-green Swallow (fish hatchery), Lazuli Bunting (Fort Falls trail in Ft. Niobrara NWR), Mourning Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Northern Waterthrush (city park), and Yellow-Breasted Chat (canoe launch near entrance to Ft. Niobrara NWR). In all, 15 warbler and 12 sparrow species were tallied.

NOU Annual Meeting - Valentine

	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
Canada Goose	x	x	x
Trumpeter Swan	x		
Wood Duck	x		
Gadwall	x		
American Wigeon	x		
Mallard	x		
Blue-winged Teal	x	x	
Northern Shoveler	x		
Northern Pintail	x		
Green-winged Teal	x		
Canvasback	x		
Redhead	x		
Ring-necked Duck	x	x	
Lesser Scaup	x		
Bufflehead	x		
Ruddy Duck	x		
Northern Bobwhite	x		
Gray Partridge	x		
Ring-necked Pheasant	x		
Sharp-tailed Grouse	x	x	
Greater Prairie-Chicken	x		
Wild Turkey	x	x	x
Pied-billed Grebe	x		
Horned Grebe	x		
Eared Grebe	x		
Western Grebe	x		
Clark's Grebe	x		
Double-crested Cormorant	x		
American White Pelican	x		

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	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
American Bittern	x		
Great Blue Heron	x	x	
Great Egret	x		
Cattle Egret	x		
Glossy Ibis	x		
White-faced Ibis	x		
Turkey Vulture	x	x	x
Bald Eagle	x	x	
Northern Harrier	x		
Cooper's Hawk	x		
Swainson's Hawk	x		
Red-tailed Hawk	x	x	x
Virginia Rail	x		
Sora	x		
American Coot	x		
American Avocet	x		
Black-bellied Plover	x		
Killdeer	x	x	x
Spotted Sandpiper	x		
Greater Yellowlegs	x		
Willet	x	x	
Lesser Yellowlegs	x		
Upland Sandpiper	x		x
Whimbrel	x		
Long-billed Curlew	x	x	
Marbled Godwit	x		
Stilt Sandpiper	x		
Sanderling	x		
Baird's Sandpiper	x		
Least Sandpiper	x		

NOU Annual Meeting - Valentine

	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
White-rumped Sandpiper	x		
Pectoral Sandpiper	x		
Semipalmated Sandpiper	x		
Long-billed Dowitcher	x		
Wilson's Snipe	x		
American Woodcock	x		
Wilson's Phalarope	x	x	
Bonaparte's Gull	x		
Franklin's Gull	x		
Ring-billed Gull	x	x	
Black Tern	x	x	
Forster's Tern	x	x	
Rock Pigeon	x		
Eurasian Collared-Dove	x	x	
Mourning Dove	x	x	x
Eastern Screech-Owl	x		
Great Horned Owl	x		
Common Nighthawk			x
Chimney Swift	x		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	x		
Belted Kingfisher	x		
Red-headed Woodpecker	x	x	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	x		
Downy Woodpecker	x		
Hairy Woodpecker	x		
Northern Flicker	x	x	x
American Kestrel	x	x	
Western Wood-Pewee	x		
Eastern Wood-Pewee	x		
Alder Flycatcher	x		

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	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
Willow Flycatcher	x		
Least Flycatcher	x		
Eastern Phoebe	x	x	
Great Crested Flycatcher	x	x	x
Western Kingbird	x	x	x
Eastern Kingbird	x	x	x
Loggerhead Shrike	x		
Bell's Vireo	x		
Warbling Vireo	x		
Red-eyed Vireo	x	x	
Blue Jay	x		x
American Crow	x	x	x
Horned Lark	x	x	x
Purple Martin	x		
Tree Swallow	x	x	x
Violet-Green Swallow	x		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	x	x	x
Bank Swallow	x		
Cliff Swallow	x	x	x
Barn Swallow	x	x	x
Black-capped Chickadee	x		x
Red-breasted Nuthatch	x		x
White-breasted Nuthatch	x	x	
Brown Creeper	x		
Rock Wren	x		
House Wren	x	x	x
Marsh Wren	x		
Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher	x		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	x		
Eastern Bluebird	x		

NOU Annual Meeting - Valentine

	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
Swainson's Thrush	x		
American Robin	x	x	x
Gray Catbird	x	x	
Northern Mockingbird	x		
Brown Thrasher	x	x	x
European Starling	x		
Sprague's Pipit	x		
Cedar Waxwing	x	x	x
Chestnut-collared Longspur			x
Ovenbird	x	x	x
Northern Waterthrush	x		
Black-and-white Warbler	x		x
Tennessee Warbler	x	x	
Orange-crowned Warbler	x		
Nashville Warbler	x		
Mourning Warbler	x		
Common Yellowthroat	x	x	x
American Redstart	x	x	x
Yellow Warbler	x	x	x
Chestnut-sided Warbler	x		
Blackpoll Warbler	x		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	x	x	
Wilson's Warbler	x		
Yellow-breasted Chat	x	x	x
Spotted Towhee	x	x	x
Chipping Sparrow	x	x	x
Clay-colored Sparrow	x	x	
Field Sparrow	x	x	x
Vesper Sparrow	x		
Lark Sparrow	x	x	x

NOU Annual Meeting - Valentine

	Cherry	Brown	Keya Paha
Lark Bunting	x		x
Savannah Sparrow		x	
Grasshopper Sparrow	x		
Song Sparrow	x		
Lincoln's Sparrow	x		
Swamp Sparrow	x		
White-throated Sparrow	x		
White-crowned Sparrow	x		
Scarlet Tanager	x		
Northern Cardinal	x	x	x
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	x		
Black-headed Grosbeak	x		
Blue Grosbeak	x		
Lazuli Bunting	x		
Indigo Bunting	x	x	
Dickcissel	x		
Bobolink	x	x	
Red-winged Blackbird	x	x	x
Eastern Meadowlark	x		
Western Meadowlark	x	x	x
Yellow-headed Blackbird	x	x	
Common Grackle	x	x	x
Great-tailed Grackle	x		
Brown-headed Cowbird	x	x	x
Orchard Oriole	x	x	
Baltimore Oriole	x	x	
House Finch	x		
Red Crossbill	x		
Pine Siskin	x		
American Goldfinch	x	x	x
House Sparrow	x	x	
Total species: 180	**177**	**63**	**43**

Oriole Consumption of Grape Jelly

Gary Lingle
45320 Kilgore Road
Gibbon NE 68840

It is well known that several species of orioles are attracted to grape (*Vitis* sp.) jelly. A few years ago I began "feeding" grape jelly to orioles in my yard in Buffalo County (Figure 1). Both Baltimore Orioles (*Icterus galbula)* and, to a lesser extent, Orchard Orioles (*Icterus spurius)* frequented my feeder upon their arrival in early May and fed daily until the red mulberries (*Morus rubra)* ripened and nesting had commenced prior to mid-June. At that time visitation to my feeder plummeted from a high of 1.5 birds per minute to 0.1 birds per minute. During peak use of my feeder, orioles consumed up to two pounds of grape jelly per day even though the most seen at one time was 7 individuals. Other people within a 10-mile radius of my yard had similar consumption rates, which raised the question of how many orioles it takes to consume two pounds of jelly per day. This paper addresses that question.

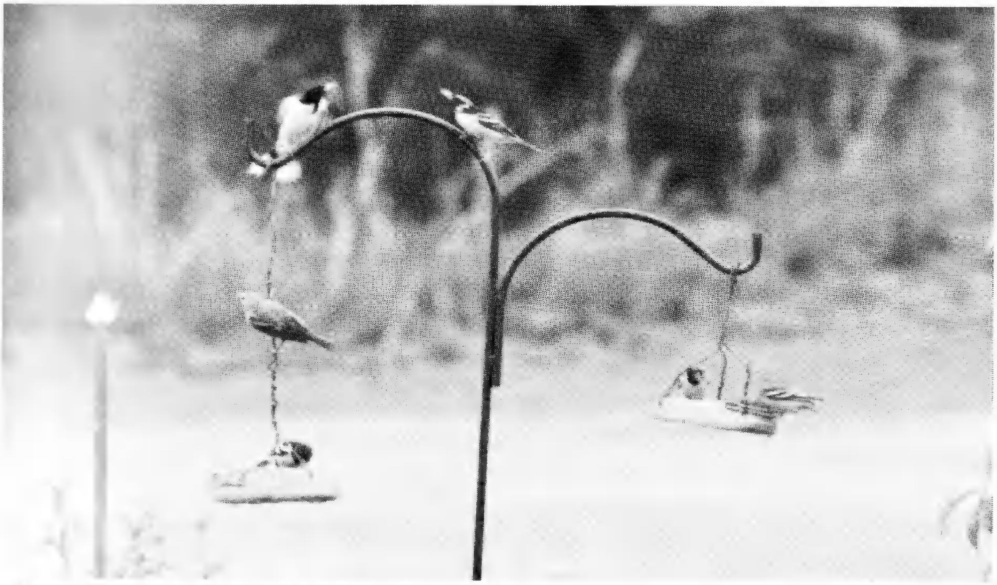


Figure 1. Oriole feeding station in my yard.

Study Area

My yard is located on Drover Island along the Platte River about 2 miles southwest of the Gibbon I-80 Exit #285 (Figure 2). It is about 1.5 acres of buffalo grass (*Buchloe dactyloides*) lawn that contains twelve small fruit trees about 6 feet in height adjacent to wooded accretion land along the north channel of the Platte River.

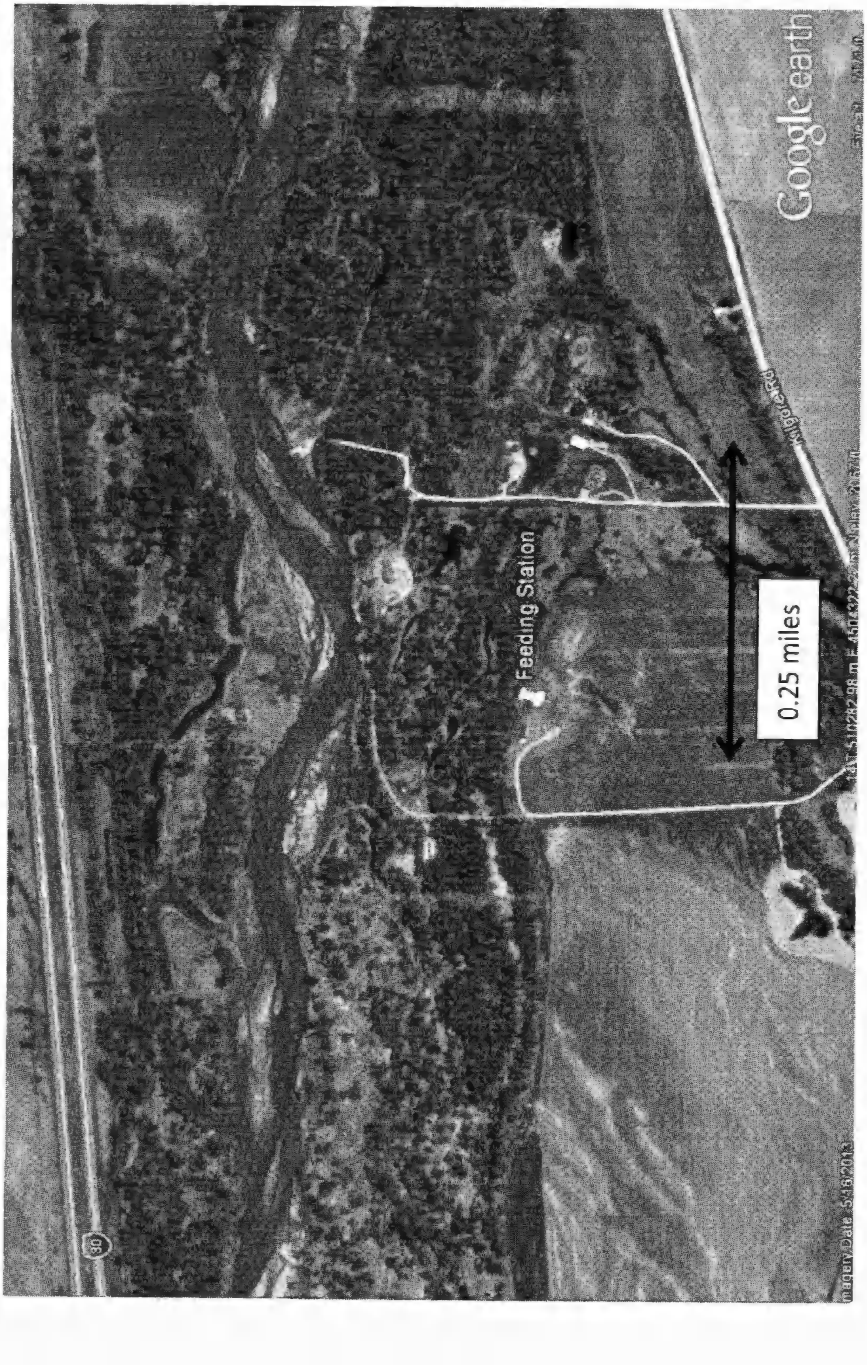

Feeding Station
0.25 miles
Kilgore Rd
Google earth
30
Imagery Date: 5/16/2013

Figure 2. Aerial view of the study area.

The wooded area is typical Platte River riparian forest that consists primarily of plains cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), red mulberry, hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), and American elm (*Ulmus americana*). The feeder is situated between two peach trees (*Prunus persica*) about 45 yards south of the forest edge.

Methods

In 2014, in order to obtain an accurate count, I placed a 12 meter mist net near my feeder and banded individuals using standard aluminum bands issued by the Bird Banding Laboratory. I banded a sample of orioles and then counted both the banded and unbanded birds visiting my feeder during 30 minute intervals on 12 occasions between June 2 -12. Assuming the probability of observing a banded individual was equal to the probability of observing an unbanded individual, I was able to estimate the total number of unbanded orioles based on the following relationship: $\frac{x_1}{x_2} = \frac{y_1}{y_2}$

where x_1= number of banded orioles observed at the feeder;
x_2= actual number banded;
y_1= number of unbanded orioles observed at the feeder;
y_2= total number of unbanded birds.

Because I knew the values for x_1, x_2, and y_1, by solving the above equation for y_2 ($y_2 = (x_2 \cdot y_1)/x_1$), I was able to estimate the total number of unbanded orioles (y_2). The total number of orioles was then estimated by adding the number of orioles banded (x_2) and the estimate of the total unbanded orioles (y_2). The total number of orioles (N) = $x_2 + y_2$.

In 2015, a more intensive banding effort was made in an attempt to band every individual and get a total count of orioles visiting my feeder. The extrapolation method of estimating the population was not used because the number of previously banded individuals returning from 2014 was unknown.

Results

In 2014 I captured and banded orioles at my feeder on 3 mornings between June 2-8 (Table 1).

Table 1. Number of orioles banded in 2014.

	Males	**Females**	**Total**
Baltimore Orioles	41	38	79
Orchard Orioles	14	8	22
Total	55	46	101

Table 2. Population estimate of orioles based on observations at feeder. Bold numbers are the highest population estimate for each species.

			Baltimore Orioles				**Orchard Orioles**			
Date	Time	#	Observed	Observed	Estimated	#	Observed	Observed	Estimated	Combined
		Banded	Banded	Unbanded	Total	Banded	Banded	Unbanded	Total	Total
2-Jun	9:30-10:00	62	24	15	101	14	7	2	18	119
	10:00-10:30	62	13	17	***143***	14	6	0	14	157
	11:45-12:15	62	20	12	99	14	3	3	28	127
4-Jun	8:15-8:45	62	24	17	106	14	5	3	22	128
9-Jun	6:38-7:08	79	8	4	119	22	5	1	26	145
10-Jun	7:40-8:10	79	12	1	86	22	5	3	35	121
	8:10-8:40	79	11	3	101	22	4	1	28	129
	8:40-9:10	79	9	0	79	22	7	2	28	107
	9:10-9:40	79	13	2	91	22	7	2	28	119
11-Jun	7:10-7:40	79	9	3	105	22	3	2	***37***	142
	7:40-8:10	79	1	0	79	22	3	1	29	108
12-Jun	6:50-7:20	79	2	0	79	22	2	0	22	101

I then counted the number of banded and unbanded orioles during twelve 30-minute periods on 6 days (Table 2). By extrapolating the number of banded individuals vs unbanded individuals at my feeder and then adding the highest numbers of each species, I estimated a maximum of 180 orioles at my feeder.

In 2015 I captured and banded orioles at my feeder on 10 mornings between May 14 and June 5 (Table 3). A total of 205 individual orioles was handled. The population was greater than 205 since a few unbanded birds were observed after banding ceased.

Table 3. Number of orioles banded in 2015 and recaptured from 2014

	Males		**Females**		**Total**
	Banded	Recaptures	Banded	Recaptures	
Baltimore orioles	77	15	63	9	164
Orchard Orioles	25	2	14	0	41
Total	102	17	77	9	205

Discussion

The number of orioles visiting my feeder was surprising given that only a maximum of 7 individuals was observed at one time. Prior to this study, I thought I was being generous in estimating that there might be 10 times the number of orioles in the area than seen at my feeder at any one time (10 x 7 = 70 individuals). Based on these findings, I had grossly underestimated the actual numbers. Assuming the population of orioles was the same each year, the extrapolation method used in 2014 accounted for 87% of the Baltimore Orioles and 90% of the Orchard Orioles handled in 2015.

A number of questions come to mind as a result of this study and form the basis for future research. Are these resident or passage individuals? How large an area does this population occupy? Is there a similar number of individuals using other feeders in the area? I intend to expand banding efforts next year to address the last question given that there were no banded individuals seen at those feeders. Who knows what other surprises these colorful neotropical migrants may provide?

Acknowledgements

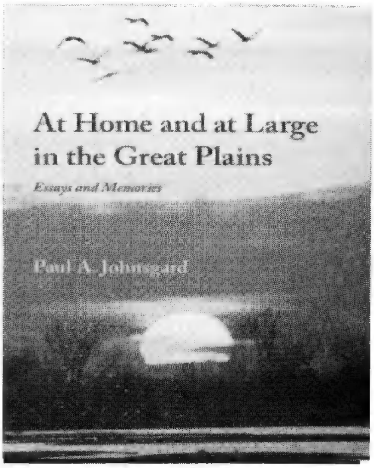
I thank Thomas Labedz, Janis Paseka, and Joe Gubanyi for reviewing this manuscript and the Bird Banding Laboratory for enabling me to band birds.

At Home and at Large in the Great Plains   Essays and Memories

Paul A. Johnsgard

Reviewed by Janis Paseka

Nebraska birders may remember reading some of the 14 essays published in this book, since they appeared previously in *Prairie Fire*, the monthly Great Plains public policy newspaper. Topics of the short and engaging essays range from changing bird life to outstanding birding areas to conservation in the Great Plains. We read about sediment deposits, the "gifts of glaciers past", which were left by retreating rivers of ice thousands of years ago and resulted in the creation of the prairie potholes so important now to our waterfowl and wading birds. One essay marvels at the variety of animal skeletons, including a saber-toothed deer, found at Ashfall Fossil Beds. Another chronicles the author's observations of the hatching of a chick of the greater race of Sandhill Cranes which breed in the mountain meadows of far western Wyoming. Johnsgard describes the new crane as "a beautiful coppery-gold chick, as shiny as a newly minted penny".



Also included is an informal autobiography, an earlier version of which appeared in 2010 in the *Nebraska Bird Review*. We read about his childhood along the Red River in North Dakota, his research at Cornell University and the Wildfowl Trust in England, and his acceptance in 1961 of a teaching position at the University of Nebraska, described by his mentor as "not a bad place from which to look for another job". But Johnsgard "fell in love with Nebraska from the very beginning" and stayed. He describes being reluctantly nudged into teaching a summer ornithology class at the University of Nebraska's Cedar Point Biological Station just east of Lake McConaughy. He had never been there before and considered a temporary relocation to western Nebraska as an unwelcome interruption to his planned summer writing. When he arrived and drove down into the junipers and cottonwoods surrounding the facility, however, he heard Rock Wrens and Black-billed Magpies, and a Great-Horned Owl took off before him from a rocky promontory. He felt like he "had suddenly been transported to a magical place". He went back to teach there for 16 of the following 17 summers, and his writing did not suffer, as he is the author of more than 80 books and many more articles. A list of all his published works appears at the end of the book.

The book is available from Zea Books, Lincoln NE, and in electronic form on http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/zeabook/30/.

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SUMMER FIELD REPORT, June-July 2015

Compiled by W. Ross Silcock
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INTRODUCTION

This summer was very wet over most of the state. Breeding Bird Survey operators noted impassible roads, especially in the western Sandhills. The benefits to water birds in the Rainwater Basin were obvious, however, with notable breeding records for Ruddy Duck and White-faced Ibis, as well as the first documented breeding in the state of Glossy Ibis, and the first Rainwater Basin breeding for Double-crested Cormorant and third for Eared Grebe.

Additional notable breeding records were led by Osprey; after 7 years of trying at various locations, success came with a bang, as at least 3 nests successfully fledged young, the first successful breedings for the state. A Barn Owl nest with 7 young was the first known in the extreme northeast, and a flightless juvenile Red-breasted Nuthatch in Seward provided an unexpected breeding record away from the north and west. Two developing situations suggest incipient breeding: there may now be two pairs of American Three-toed Woodpeckers in East Ash Canyon, Dawes County, and a major influx of Ovenbirds into Nebraska National Forest at Halsey the last two years suggests the first breeding there.

Several species of shorebirds arrived early, close to expected first dates, but both dowitchers really beat the early dates: a Long-billed was record early, and Short-billeds were unusually early as well. A netted and banded Tennessee Warbler was record early by 16 days.

Rarities were few and not as mega as Summer 2014; a Snowy Plover was the first July record for the Rainwater Basin, 2 female Broad-tailed Hummingbirds (photographed together) were the 4th and 5th in spring for the state, and a vociferous Hooded Warbler set up shop at Nebraska National Forest at Halsey.

Notable was excellent coverage of the Niobrara River Valley from Valentine to the Niobrara Valley Preserve and grasslands southwest of Nebraska National Forest at McKelvie. Many out-of-state birders working those areas as well as the rest of the state reported their Nebraska sightings to eBird, providing useful information. One problem crops up in these situations though: non-local birders rarely have as good a grasp of species distribution within Nebraska as experienced locals, as exemplified by the several reports this summer of Brewer's Blackbirds in central and eastern Nebraska. As eBird filters continue to improve, such observations are expected to decline.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BBS: Breeding Bird Survey
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
Cem: Cemetery
CLNWR: Crescent L NWR, Garden Co
Co(s): County(ies)
CSP: Chadron SP, Dawes Co
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
GPD: Gavins Point Dam, Knox and Cedar Cos
HCR: Harlan County Res, Harlan Co
imm: immature
ICSP: Indian Cave State Park, Richardson/Nemaha Cos
juv: juvenile
L: Lake
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co
m. ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NM: National Monument
NNF: Nebraska National Forest
NVP: Niobrara Valley Preserve, Brown, Cherry, Keya Paha Cos
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
PSP: Ponca SP, Dixon Co
RA: Recreation Area
Res: Reservoir
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore, and Thayer Cos
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Denton
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area

GAZETTEER

Harvard Marsh: Harvard WPA, Clay Co
Jack Sinn: Memorial WMA, Lancaster and Saunders Cos
Pine Ridge: escarpment in Sioux, Dawes, and Sheridan Cos
Sandhills: large area of sand-based prairie in north-central Nebraska

Smith Falls: SP, Cherry Co
Wildcat Hills: escarpment in Scotts Bluff, Banner, and Morrill Cos

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WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA
WWH: Walt Wagner-Hecht, Cedar Rapids, IA
WZw: William Zwartjes, San Antonio, TX

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: The only report was of a probably injured bird in Seward 8 Jul (CNK). There are a number of such records, now rare but annual.

Snow Goose: The usual scattered reports were received; best tally was the 3 in the RWB 26 Jul (JGJ).

Ross's Goose: This species is less than annual in summer; one was with Canada Geese in Saunders Co 17 Jul (SQ, details).

Canada Goose: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Trumpeter Swan: The southerly breeding pair near Ravenna was successful this year; the pair had 3 "gray juveniles" on 19 Jul (LR, RH). This pair has been at the site since 2011, but only known to have raised young 2011 and 2012.

Ruddy Shelduck: One near Geneva 12 Jul (JGJ) was the 3rd reported for the state; all are apparent escaped birds.

Wood Duck: This species breeds statewide, but is uncommon in the Panhandle; a hen with 12 young was at Whitney L, Dawes Co, 13 Jul (KDy).

Gadwall: Reports were routine of this common Sandhills breeder, uncommon to rare elsewhere.

American Wigeon: This species is uncommon to rare in the breeding season; there were only 2 reports, both likely tardy spring migrants. Two were in Lincoln Co 2 Jun (TJW) and one in Cherry Co 10 Jun (ACo).

Mallard: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Blue-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Cinnamon Teal: All reports were, as expected, from the Panhandle; best count was the 6 (5 males, one fem) at a flooded field in Box Butte Co 13 Jul (KDy).

Northern Shoveler: The 23 on 9 Jun in Clay Co (RSt), 27 in Lincoln Co 11 Jun (TJW), and 4 in Dodge Co 11-12 Jun (CC, RSa) were likely late migrants, although breeding is possible anywhere away from the Sandhills, though rare. Singles in Hall Co 15 Jun (JLo) and Seward Co 8 Jul (CNK) may have been breeders.

Northern Pintail: Generally a rare or uncommon breeder in the RWB, a hen and brood at Harvard Marsh 26 Jul (JGJ) was a good find.

Green-winged Teal: A hen and brood in Clay Co 26 Jul (JGJ) provided only the 3rd breeding record for the RWB since 2007; there are older reports for 1985 and 1987. The 23 at a flooded field in Box Butte Co 29 Jun (LE) were likely molt migrants; males leave incubating females in Jun. The 7 in the RWB 27 Jun (JGJ) were probably also molt migrants.

Canvasback: One in Seward Co 1 Jun (LE) and 2 on 9 Jun at Harvard Marsh (RSt) were tardy; there are few spring reports in the south and east in late May and early Jun.

Redhead: There was a large influx into the RWB beginning 27 Jun, when 100 were estimated (JGJ) Numbers peaked at 345 on 26 Jul, and 242 of those were at Harvard Marsh (JGJ). No evidence of breeding was noted in the RWB this summer, and so it is likely these birds were failed breeders. Away from the RWB in the south and east, reports are rare; one was in Lancaster Co 9 Jul (BHe).

Ring-necked Duck: As with Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Ducks have a propensity for showing up on occasion in mid-summer in the RWB despite being rare in that season. This year, 3 were reported from different locations 27 Jun-7 Jul (JGJ).

Lesser Scaup: This species is rare away from the Sandhills in summer (late Jun-early Sep); the RWB is a favored location, however, with singles there 20 Jun (JGJ), 27 Jun (JGJ), and 3 on 8 Jul (JGJ). Two at LO 14 Jul (MWi) and a male at L Bennington, Douglas Co, 31 Jul (JR) were likely early fall migrants and/or failed breeders.

Common Goldeneye: Prior to this summer there had been only 10 reports in the period 9 Jun-11 Sep, but this summer there were two: a first-year male at County Line WPA, York and Fillmore Cos, 8 Jul (JGJ), and a single at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co, 16 Jul (BRe photo).

Hooded Merganser: Mid-Jun through Aug reports of fem-type birds, most if not all one-year-old non-breeders, are numerous statewide; this summer at least 25 were reported, including a total of 15 in the RWB 7-8 Jul (JGJ).

Common Merganser: Two sites that have previously hosted this species in summer did so again. Two fems at the NVP 13 Jun (CNK) may be part of a small breeding population there, and 4 males at LO 14 Jul (MWi) were likely molt migrants.

Ruddy Duck: There were 15-20 previous records of breeding in the RWB. This summer there were two: broods were found 8 Jul at Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA, York Co, and 26 Jul at Sininger WMA, York Co, (JGJ). Several pairs with a displaying male were seen in the RWB as well (JGJ). A male at Oak L, Lincoln, 20 Jun (CJa) was unexpected, although breeding has occurred in Lancaster Co previously.

Northern Bobwhite: Bobwhites seem to be in expanse mode; the "first in years" was seen in Dakota Co 1 Jun (BFH), reports north of the Platte River Valley were from Holt, Loup, and Custer Cos 13 Jun (WF, LR, RH), and McPherson Co (RSt), areas near the northwestern edge of the range. Even in the southeast, farmers advised that "quail were doing very well this year" (fide CNK).

Gray Partridge: The only report was from the current range: 2 in Holt Co 7 Jul (MB).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were routine of this locally common northern and western grasslands resident.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Reports were routine of this locally common virtually statewide grasslands resident.

Wild Turkey: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Common Loon: Occasionally non-breeding imms appear or linger in summer; singles were in Sheridan Co 6 Jun (AK), at BOL 9 Jun (LE), and at Cunningham L, Omaha, 25 Jul (JR).

Pied-billed Grebe: Reports were routine of this common Sandhills and RWB breeder, uncommon elsewhere.

Eared Grebe: The usual Nebraska breeding range is in the north and west, but recent reports from the RWB are increasing. Only the 3rd documented RWB breeding record was at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, 3 Jul (JGJ); there were 11 nests with eggs, but by 9 Aug most nests were abandoned and only one pair with young was seen (JGJ).

Western Grebe: This species is rarely encountered in mid-summer in the south and east; one at Harvard Marsh 19 and 26 Jul is only the 4th summer RWB record and first for Jul (JGJ). Quite unexpected also was one even farther east, in Saunders Co 19 Jun (RSt). These are only the 13th and 14th mid-summer (6 Jun-17 Aug) records from Holt Co eastward.

Double-crested Cormorant: This species lingers into summer, although most such birds are imm non-breeders such as the 2-7 at BOL and one in Saunders Co during the period (SMa, LE, BHe). The RWB always hosts a few also, but this year 2 pairs were building nests in small willows at Harvard Marsh 19 Jul, and were incubating 26 Jul, when 2 additional nests were being built (JGJ). This appears to be a first RWB breeding record, and one of fewer than 10 away from the northern and western Sandhills (east probably to Holt Co) and LM.

American White Pelican: First hints of southward movement in the southeast were of a flock of 200 over SCP 23 Jun (LE), and 56 at BOL 2 days later (LE); fall migration usually becomes notable in Jul.

American Bittern: Breeding occurs mostly in the Sandhills and probably the RWB, but is possible though rare anywhere water conditions are suitable. In the RWB this year, 1-2 were at North Lake Basin, Seward Co, through the period (m. ob.).

Least Bittern: Reports were from 4 sites, more than usual, all in the southeast. A pair was on territory at Lincoln Saline Wetlands, Lancaster Co, at least 9-16 Jul (BHe video, MW, m. ob.), 2 were at a Wetland Reserve Program site in Seward Co 7 Jun (JGJ), singles were at a private wetland adjacent to Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, 29 Jun and 3 Jul (JGJ), and one was at Homestead Lake RA, Butler Co, 19 Jun (J&LS).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this locally common regular breeder west and central, uncommon east.

Great Egret: Reports were routine of this common regular summer visitor east and central, rare west.

Snowy Egret: The only report of this uncommon summer visitor was of one in the RWB 8 Jul (JGJ).

Little Blue Heron: None were reported of this uncommon eastern and central summer visitor.

Cattle Egret: Rounding out a lackluster summer for white herons, there were few reports, best count was the 13 in the RWB 19 Jul (JGJ).

Green Heron: Northwesterly were 2 in Loup Co 13 Jun (WF); the summer range covers most of the state with numbers declining north of the Platte River Valley and westward.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: Although a regular breeder in the RWB, the 28 nesting ads and 10 juvs within a nesting colony of ibis at Harvard Marsh 7 Jul (JGJ) was noteworthy.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: Only one was reported, a juv in the RWB 26 Jul (JGJ); this species is a rare post-breeding disperser north to Nebraska in late summer.

Glossy Ibis: Although breeding has been suspected a few times when this species has been observed within breeding colonies of White-faced Ibis, proof was lacking until this summer, when 3 nests tended by ads were photographed at Harvard Marsh 7 Jul (JGJ). Three, along with a probable hybrid based on facial skin color, were located in Sheridan Co 21 Jul, where the observer (JGJ) noted: "Finding Glossy Ibis was simply a function of finding groups of *Plegadis* ibis and having decent looks at the birds". Another was near Lakeside 24 Jul (PMH). (See Glossy Ibis article on page 139 of this issue.)

White-faced Ibis: As noted above, a colony of 70 White-faced Ibis were tending at least 11 nests at Harvard Marsh 7 Jul (JGJ) and also at a second RWB site, Kirkpatrick Basin North WMA, York Co, 8 Jul (JGJ). Although most nests had eggs or young, the 4 ready-to-fledge young seen at the Harvard Marsh colony provided the first proof of successful breeding for the Rainwater Basin (JGJ). Including these records of breeding, there have been 12-15 instances of breeding in the state since 1984, when this species began its remarkable increase in numbers. High numbers were in the western Sandhills; a drive from Lakeside to Smith L SRA yielded well over 175 ibis (KD, AK).

Turkey Vulture: An unusual sight was the flock of 60 counted on a sand bar at PSP 9 Jul (EJo). Such groups (including roosting groups) in mid-summer are imm non-breeders; breeding probably first occurs at 3-4 years of age, although data are scant.

Osprey: After 7 years of failure, this is the year that Ospreys finally got it right in the breeding department. At least 3 pairs attempted nesting in Scotts Bluff Co and young were fledged by at least 2 of these (AK, KD). A nest near the Western Sugar Factory just off highway 26 on the east side of Scottsbluff contained 3 juvs 25 Jul (KD, photo) that were ready to depart, and another nest on a platform near Riverview Golf Course west of Scottsbluff near the highway 92 bridge, had 3 young a little younger than the "sugar factory" birds the same day (KD, photos, CNK). A third site, on Shannon Road near Mitchell, had young "a few weeks" prior to 25 Jul, but no birds were present on that date and evidence of fledging is lacking (KD). A successful nest on a platform erected by Midwest Electric Cooperative downstream from LO had a juv on 22 Jul (JGJ, photo), and another juv was seen flying in the area 18 Jul (RSt). Thus, the first year of breeding success for the species in Nebraska had no fewer than

3 successful nests. There was a report that another nest platform some 15 miles east of LO was in use (fide JGJ), but no further information came to hand.

These three juvenile Ospreys were in a nest near the Riverview Golf Course along the North Platte River, Scotts Bluff County, here photographed 25 Jul 2015 by Kathy DeLara. This is one of 3 successful nests in 2015, the first year this species has bred successfully in Nebraska.

Mississippi Kite: Unexpected, and far from known Nebraska nesting sites, were 2 birds at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 26 Jun, an imm and possible ad, that flew in, circled, and returned to the northeast (RS). Eggs are usually laid in early Jun in Nebraska, with fledging around 2 months later.

Bald Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder.

Northern Harrier: Breeding is not often documented; a nest with downy young in Loup Co was photographed 22 Jun (MF fide JGJ). Breeding is presumed to occur statewide, but most sightings in summer are from extensive wetland areas.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Red-shouldered Hawk: None were reported of this rare regular local summer resident.

Broad-winged Hawk: This species breeds in the southeast in low numbers. This summer, singles were seen at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 20-27 Jun (RS, BP, SMa), and 3 were at FF, 2 juvs and an ad, 10 Jul (NV), strongly suggestive of breeding there. The only other report was of one in Cedar Co 10 Jun (MMc), north of the Nebraska breeding range; this, along with a previous late May record from PSP, may have been a late migrant. No westerly reports were received.

Swainson's Hawk: Rare in the east, one in Douglas Co 23 Jul (THo) may have been an early-fledged bird; a fledgling banded in California in summer 2011 had reached Sioux City by mid-Sep the same year. This species is rare in summer in the RWB; one was in Clay Co 3 Jul (JGJ).

Red-tailed Hawk: The "Krider's" form breeds in far western Nebraska; one was in Cheyenne Co 3 Jun (IBa, details).

Ferruginous Hawk: A Dundy Co nest noted in the Spring Report had 2 nearly-fledged young 15 Jun (JGJ).

Golden Eagle: Reports were routine of this uncommon western resident.

Virginia Rail: Reports were routine of this uncommon, locally common, regular breeder north and west, rare south and east.

Sora: Nesting may occur anywhere in the state, but there is little solid evidence, and it is difficult to separate reports of migrants from local breeders. Eggs may be laid as late as early Jul, and so it appears that observations of 1-2 birds at that time might relate to local breeders, but ads in any numbers in Jul are probably migrants. Soras were "common, ubiquitous" in the RWB 19 Jul (JGJ), including at least 8 in Fillmore Co 21 Jul (CNK), and 9 were in non-breeding habitat, a flooded field, in Box Butte Co 12 Jul (B&DW). Reports after 1 Jun are problematic, but these could indicate breeding: 2 were at Harvard Marsh 9 Jun (RSt), singles were at North Lake Basin, Seward Co, 3 and 16 Jul (BP, RSt), 1-2 were at Lincoln Saline Wetlands, Lancaster Co, 9-15 Jul (BHe, MW, m. ob.) but 4 there 18 Jul (MW) may have been migrants, and one was at Jack Sinn 5 Jul (BP).

This nest downstream from L Ogallala, Keith County, contained an adult Osprey and a juvenile, photographed here 22 Jul 2015 by Joel Jorgensen. This is one of 3 or 4 successful nests in 2015, the first year this species has bred successfully in Nebraska.

American Coot: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, regular breeder north-central, fairly common elsewhere.

Sandhill Crane: The pair at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, reported in spring was seen again, still with the lone half-grown youngster, 16 Jul (KD). Non-breeding stragglers occur on occasion, usually in the RWB or the central Platte River Valley; 3 ads were in Buffalo Co 18 Jun (PHa), likely the same 3 reported in the RWB 19 Jul (JGJ). A surprise was one at Eppley Airfield, Omaha, 28 Jul (JT, DSt).

Black-necked Stilt: There were numerous reports from Sheridan Co, although best tally submitted was only 3, a pair with a 3-week-old chick 21 Jul (JGJ). The other reports were from the RWB, where this species occurs each year in small numbers. One was near Friend, Saline Co, 1 Jun (RSt), a male was in Clay Co 19 Jul (JGJ), a fem was in Fillmore Co the same day (JGJ), and 3 were in Fillmore Co 26 Jul (JGJ).

American Avocet: Easterly were a spring migrant in Cass Co 3 Jun (IBa) and a fall migrant in Dodge Co 14 Jul (CC). Best count was 128, in Sheridan Co 13 Jul (KDy). High fall counts are 643-1100. First fall migrants reported in the RWB were 7 rather early on 3 Jul (JGJ), and best count there was 12 on 19 Jul (JGJ).

Black-bellied Plover: None were reported of this uncommon fall migrant; early dates are 25-28 Jul, however.

American Golden-Plover: None were reported of this locally common eastern and central migrant, uncommon west. The first migrants are ads, which are rarely seen in the interior; juvs comprise the bulk of fall migrants, and pass through during Sep-Oct.

Snowy Plover: A worn ad in Clay Co 3 Jul was the first RWB Jul report on record (JGJ).

Semipalmated Plover: Reports were routine of this fairly common regular spring and fall migrant east, becoming uncommon west.

Piping Plover: Despite current high water at LM, 2 pairs were found 2 Jun (TG) and 3 birds 29 Jun (CVB). The few reports elsewhere were from known breeding locations (CC, RS).

Killdeer: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Mountain Plover: None were reported of this fairly common breeder in Kimball Co.

Spotted Sandpiper: Although this species breeds statewide, specific reports of nesting are scarce; an ad with 3 downy young near LaPlatte, Sarpy Co, 13 Jul (AG) was a rather late hatch.

Solitary Sandpiper: Rather early were singles in the RWB 3 Jul (JGJ) and in Custer Co the same day (TH); early dates are 24-25 Jul.

Greater Yellowlegs: Stragglers can occur anytime in Jun, but numbers are few then, and may be birds that discontinued migration. One was in Dodge Co 11 Jun (RSa). One in Seward Co 27 Jun (JGJ) arrived about on time for the first fall migrants.

Willet: Adults with a fuzzy chick were in northern Sheridan Co 5 Jun (CNK); this species usually has young by early Jun.

Lesser Yellowlegs: First arrivals detected were 2 in western Seward Co 20 Jun (JGJ), rather early; early dates are 16-19 Jun.

Upland Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant. The 50 near Sumner, Dawson Co, on 12 Jul (TEL) were somewhat early if indeed a pre-migration gathering; early dates for migrants are generally in late Jul.

Long-billed Curlew: Reports were routine of this fairly common regular spring and fall migrant central and west, rare casual east.

Marbled Godwit: In contrast with spring, Marbled Godwits are rare easterly in fall, with only 30 records in all, 18 of these in the RWB. Thus a good find was one in western Seward Co 19 Jul (JGJ).

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

Dunlin: None were reported, nor expected; this is a late migrant in fall, arriving in Sep.

Baird's Sandpiper: One in the RWB 3 Jul (JGJ) was early. Expected early date is 9 Jul (three times); latest date in Jun is 24 Jun.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide fall migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Somewhat tardy were 2 in Cedar Co 10 Jun (MMc) and 14 at Jack Sinn 13 Jun (MW); last dates for this late spring migrant are 21-23 Jun.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common spring and fall migrant in the Rainwater Basin, uncommon eastward, rare westward.

Pectoral Sandpiper: One in Seward Co 8 Jul (CNK) was rather early; early dates are 4-5 Jul.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: This species is a late spring migrant; however, the 14 at Jack Sinn 13 Jun (MW) were rather late, as late dates are 15 Jun (three times). Rather early in fall was one in Seward Co 8 Jul (CNK); early fall dates are 2-4 Jul.

Western Sandpiper: There were only 3 reports of this fairly common but tedious-to-look-for fall migrant: one was at a flooded field west of Hemingford, Box Butte Co, 12 Jul (B&DW), 2 were at Wright L, east of Hemingford, 31 Jul (DJe), and one was in Clay Co 19 Jul (JGJ).

Short-billed Dowitcher: Reports of 21 individuals 13-21 Jul (m. ob.) were received, expected timing for ads. However, one at a flooded field in Box Butte Co 29 Jun (LE) was unprecedentedly early. Failed breeders flock up and depart the breeding range in late Jun (Birds of North America Online) and there is a documented record for Iowa 26 Jun 1988, suggesting that such an occurrence is at least possible. Early dates for Nebraska otherwise are 11-12 Jul.

Long-billed Dowitcher: As with Short-billed, a very early bird was reported, in the RWB 3 Jul (JGJ), earliest fall arrival on record.

Wilson's Snipe: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide fall migrant.

American Woodcock: None were reported of this uncommon regular breeder east and central.

Wilson's Phalarope: Migration is evident in mid-Jul; 1000+ were at a flooded field in Box Butte Co 16 Jul (L&BP). There are several breeding and summer records in the RWB; 1-18 were at various locations there 7 Jun-19 Jul (JGJ).

Red-necked Phalarope: Reports were routine of this fairly common regular fall migrant west, becoming uncommon east.

Franklin's Gull: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide summer visitor.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide summer visitor.

California Gull: The only report was of 6 ads at LO 21 Jul (JGJ); numbers increase at LM beginning in late Jul.

Herring Gull: None were reported of this locally uncommon summer visitor.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Numbers are fewest in mid-summer for this spring and fall migrant; only the 6th record for 16 May-11 Aug was an ad at LO 19-20 Jul (RSt, TJW).

Least Tern: Reports were from traditional eastern summer locations, including 11 ads and juvs in western Douglas Co 31 Jul (JR) and 4, including a juv at a pond with sandbars in Dodge Co 19 Jul (CC).

Caspian Tern: This species is an uncommon migrant and rare summer visitor statewide; the 34th and 35th records in the period 11 Jun-17 Jul were singles at LO 29 Jun (CVB) and L Bennington, Douglas Co, (SMa). Fall migrants arrive in mid-Jul; 1-3 were at LO 19-21 Jul (RSt, JGJ).

Black Tern: Reports were routine of this common northern and western breeder and statewide fall migrant.

Common Tern: This species appeared far earlier than expected, and in wetland habit atypical of the species, with 4 ads in Fillmore Co 3 Jul, the first RWB Jul record (JGJ). One was seen in the same county 21 Jul (CNK), still rather early even for fall migration; previous early fall dates were 22-30 Jul.

Forster's Tern: Two were reported in mid-summer: singles in Buffalo Co 13 Jun (BBr) and in Hall Co 23 Jun (RBr). These are only the 20th and 21st records in the period 12 Jun-3 Jul.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: Reports continued from spring at 2 locations, as this species consolidates in Nebraska: the nesting birds on the University of Nebraska-Kearney campus were seen at least through 9 Jul (RH, LR, JRi), and the sporadic visitor to the Ochsner yard in Ogallala was seen 30 Jul (JO). Elsewhere, one was in Pierce for "a week or so" through 10 Jun (SB), and one was in a rural Lincoln Co yard 6 Jul (VC, photo).

Mourning Dove: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide breeder.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

Black-billed Cuckoo: An encouraging 8, all singles, were reported statewide (m. ob.); low numbers in recent years are a concern.

Barn Owl: The LM region is a favored breeding location for this species; 3 young were at a traditional road-cut nest 21 Jun and 6 Jul (CNK, JJ), and "several" were nesting in rocky outcrops behind Cedar Point Biological Station 18-19 Jul (RSt). Nesting is rare in the north half of the state; a carefully-monitored nest in Dixon Co with 7 young by the end of the period (BFH, JJ) was the first known breeding record northeast of Knox, Platte, and Dodge Cos. One in Nemaha Co 18 Jul (MHu, ADd) was unexpected so far east.

Eastern Screech-Owl: A nest box in southern Dixon Co that had at least one young 29 May fledged 2 young 3 Jun (JJ), about the norm for this species.

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Burrowing Owl: There were 9 breeding pairs at CLNWR this summer (fide KMo, ADu); this species is a common breeder in most of the Panhandle.

Barred Owl: One west of Bostwick, southwest Nuckolls Co, 8 Jul (D&JP), is part of a recently-established population at the east end of the Republican River Valley; westernmost report to date in the Republican River Valley is from Bloomington, southwest Franklin Co.

Long-eared Owl: Reports of breeding are few, although there are breeding reports for much of the state; 2-3 begging young were near Thedford, Thomas Co, 13 Jul (MB). Two flushed at Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 14 Jun (CRi) were likely breeders also.

Short-eared Owl: The 4 reports were all from the north and west, where most summer birds are found: singles were at Valentine NWR, Cherry Co, 21 Jun (AHe), in Banner Co 3 Jun (TG), Dawes Co 6 Jun (TG), and northern Sioux Co 5 Jul (B&DW).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Following this spring's excitement over two documented nestings, the only report this season was intriguing also: one heard in the cedar canyons of southeast Lincoln Co 3 Jun (LDe) was the observer's latest date for this species. These owls winter there and leave in Mar, with previous latest date for a calling bird 2 Apr (LDe). Breeding has not been documented in the area.

Common Nighthawk: A "nice flock" was over Lincoln 30 Jul (R&SW); this is a little early for fall flocks, which usually form in mid-Aug.

Common Poorwill: This species probably breeds in the Niobrara River Valley east in small numbers to Knox Co; there are several summer reports for Knox and Holt Cos, and this summer, there was a report of 5 near Lynch, Boyd Co, 2 Jul (HBi).

Chuck-will's-widow: Observers found this species somewhat elusive in its usual haunts in the extreme southeast; none were found in Pawnee and Johnson Cos 1 Jun (JGJ), and only 2 on a Jefferson Co nightjar survey route 24 Jun, where 12 were found in 2012 (JG, TEL). Oak Glen WMA, Seward Co, continues to host 1-2 most years; one was there 1 Jun (JG). ICSP also came through, but only one was heard there, on 3 Jun (SSc, JC).

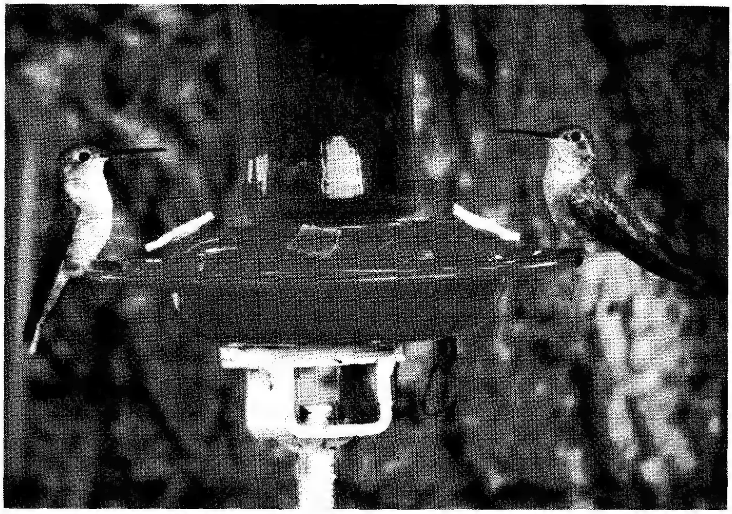
Eastern Whip-poor-will: There are previous reports from the Niobrara River Valley westward to eastern Cherry Co, but there have been few in recent years. However, there were multiple reports this summer from Smith Falls, where up to 3 were heard singing "constantly" at the campground 14-19 Jun (MMc, AAz, SHo). There are two reports from NNF Halsey, in 2011 and 2013; this summer provided the 3rd, two calling from the sides of the road to the fire tower (BP). Care should be taken at this location to separate Whip-poor-will calls from multiple simultaneously-singing Poor-wills, which are common here.

Chimney Swift: This species has expanded westward into the Panhandle in the last 50 years in towns along rivers and streams; Harrison may have been the last Panhandle town to record Chimney Swifts, in 2005. This summer reports were from Chadron, Ft. Robinson SHP, and Scottsbluff (m. ob.).

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine of this uncommon Panhandle breeder.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Migration is underway starting in mid-Jul; earliest reported away from Missouri River Valley breeding areas were singles in Burwell 19 Jul (LR, RH) and Jefferson Co 21 Jul (CNK). A nest in Omaha had eggs hatching 30 Jul (D&JP, photo), a rather late date as fall migration peaks in Sep.

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: The fem that arrived in an eastern Dawes Co yard this spring was still present 10 Jul, and a second bird was seen 21 Jun for only one day (JW, photo). A male had not been seen during the period (JW). The second female is only the 5th Nebraska record for Jun. No fall migrants were reported in the state by the end of the period.



These female Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were together in the Juanita Whittecar yard, eastern Dawes County, 21 Jun 2015. The second female is only the 5th Jun record for the state.

Rufous Hummingbird: Like both Calliope and Broad-tailed hummers this fall, no migrants had arrived by the end of the period for this rare western fall migrant. Early fall dates are 11-12 Jul.

Calliope Hummingbird: None were reported by the end of the period of this rare western fall migrant. Early dates are 13-14 Jul.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Red-headed Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central resident, locally rare west.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

American Three-toed Woodpecker: The exciting news regarding this species in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co, continues. There are now 9 sightings located in the general area where separate singles were first discovered in summer 2014 by Jeff Birek and Nancy Drilling of Bird Conservancy of the Rockies. Later that summer it was shown that a male and female were in the area, but not seen together (MB, JGJ, SJD photos). The 3 new sightings this summer were of a pair seen 3 Jul at least a half mile southwest of the other 6 sightings from 2014 and 2015, as well as a single sighting near the pair 15 Jul (KDy video, WM). It appears that there may be 2 pairs in the general area.

Northern Flicker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident and breeder.

Pileated Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this locally uncommon southeastern riparian forest resident.

American Kestrel: Fledged young with ads were in Omaha 21 Jun (GD), perhaps a bit ahead of schedule.

Peregrine Falcon: The reports were from Omaha and Lincoln, almost certainly of the resident birds there.

Prairie Falcon: Breeding is restricted to the west and northwest, but there are several summer records to the east and south of this range, likely wide-ranging breeders or imms; one was in McPherson Co 7 Jul (JJ).

Western Wood-Pewee: Reports consolidated the eastward edge of the breeding range; one was northwest of North Platte 7 Jul (TJW), two were heard at Cody Park, North Platte, 10 Jun (ACo, photo), and another was at LO 4 Jun (TJW), while 1-2 were at the NVP in Brown and Keya Paha Cos 11 Jun (CNK) and 19 Jun (MMc). Both Eastern and Western Wood-Pewees occur at these locations. Two were at NNF Halsey 16 Jun (TJW), where the species is an irregular breeder.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: Related to the previous account, there were numerous reports of up to 5 Eastern Wood-Pewees west to Smith Falls 13-20 Jun (MMc, m. ob.), and a single was in Valentine 21 Jul (MCl).

Acadian Flycatcher: Reports were from the 2 current strongholds, ICSP and FF. At ICSP up to 5 were reported through 4 Jul (SSc, GMa), and at FF, where in the process of establishing, 1-2 were reported through 15 Jul (AG, m. ob.), but there were probably at least 4 males present (JR).

Alder Flycatcher: Last date was of one a bit tardy at FF 30 May (JR); last dates are 4-5 Jun.

Willow Flycatcher: A good tally was the 8 at SCP 4 Jun (RSt); some or all may have been migrants. Of interest were the absence of summer reports from the Panhandle; reports from there have historically been scarce.

Least Flycatcher: There are a few previous reports of singing Leasts lingering into Jun in the south and east where summering is not expected. This summer singles were at FF 9 Jun (APa) and in Buffalo Co 10 Jun (MCr). Migrants are generally gone by the end of May. Fall migration begins in mid-Jul; singles were at Rowe Sanctuary 16 Jul (LBe) and in Dodge Co 16 Jul (singing, D&JP). One in southern Garden Co 17 Jul (LBe) was in an area where summering birds occur.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: One near the east edge of the summer range near Whiteclay 28 Jun (PMH) was only the 4th record from Sheridan Co, all since 2011, when breeding occurred for the first time; this species has expanded slowly eastward in the Pine Ridge in recent years.

Eastern Phoebe: Reports were west to Merritt Res, Cherry Co, 9 Jul (CRi) and LO 18-19 Jul (RSt). Summer reports farther west, in the Panhandle, are rare except for the Pine Ridge.

Say's Phoebe: Reports were routine of this common regular breeder west, rare central and northeast.

Great Crested Flycatcher: The summer distribution of this species is similar to that of Eastern Phoebe in that it is rare in the Panhandle except for the Pine Ridge, where it is an uncommon breeder. The two reports from there were of singles at CSP 8 Jun (JHe) and Gilbert-Baker WMA, Sioux Co, 3 Jun (TG).

Cassin's Kingbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common Panhandle breeder.

Western Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Eastern Kingbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: This species has been found nesting almost every year since 2002 in southeast and south-central Nebraska. This year, ads and 3 fledged young were at a site near Pawnee City through 18 Jul (JJa fide SSc, m. ob.), and an ad and a juv were near Valley 25-31 Jul (JR). The only other report was of an ad male in southwest Richardson Co 11 Jul (BP, photo).

Loggerhead Shrike: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder.

Bell's Vireo: Reports were routine of this common central, uncommon elsewhere, breeder.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern breeder.

Plumbeous Vireo: This species is not known to breed in the Wildcat Hills of Scotts Bluff and Banner Cos, and so a report of one with another presumptive vireo near WHNC 2 Jul (JMu fide AF) was significant. The identity of the second bird was not determined; these may have been a pair of ad Plumbeous Vireos that had moved south from the Pine Ridge, one having initiated molt. There are only 3 spring records of Cassin's Vireo for Nebraska.

Blue-headed Vireo: None were reported of this uncommon eastern spring migrant; last spring dates are in the first week of Jun.

Warbling Vireo: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Red-eyed Vireo: Reports were routine of this common breeder north and east, fairly common west and southwest.

Pinyon Jay: Reports were routine of this rare breeder and uncommon summer visitor west.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common breeder east and central, fairly common west.

Black-billed Magpie: Distribution continues to be spotty; magpies are "very rarely seen these days" in Scotts Bluff Co (AK), although there were 3 reports of 1-2 birds from the Scotts Bluff NM area (TG, EJo, PWy). Ft. Robinson, Dawes and Sioux Cos, remains a stronghold (LE), and there were "lots at various places" in Sioux Co 22-23 Jun (CNK). The LM area still holds a small population, exemplified by the 4 at Clear Creek WMA, Garden Co, 17 Jul (LBe). Elsewhere, the only reports were of 1-2 southeast of Bostwick, Nuckolls Co, 8 Jul (D&JP), and one southwest of NNF McKelvie in Cherry Co 26 Jun (CRi).

American Crow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder and resident.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Purple Martin: This species occurs in the Sandhills in low numbers, especially westward; one was in Valentine 13 Jul (KDy), 2 were in Custer Co 3 Jul (TH), and 3 were in Valley Co 19 Jul (LR, RH). There were no reports west of these.

Tree Swallow: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, fairly common west.

Violet-green Swallow: Reports were routine of this uncommon Panhandle breeder.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Bank Swallow: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, fairly common west.

Cliff Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Barn Swallow: A paper published by Brown and Page (2015, NBR 83(1): 31-35) documents a hybrid Cliff x Barn Swallow netted near Roscoe 17 Jun 2014. There are only 3 prior documented records of this hybrid for North America. The hybrid was a male, paired with a fem Barn Swallow (Brown and Page 2015).

Black-capped Chickadee: A nest with nestlings found in Lincoln 6 Jun was timely (TEL).

Tufted Titmouse: There were only 3 reports away from Missouri River Valley counties, typical of this mature forest species for which there are only 6 records west of Lancaster Co; even there occurrence is spotty. This summer, one was in Pawnee Co 19 Jun (WF), two were in the same county 18 Jun (TG), and one was at Rockford L SRA, Gage Co, 19 Jun (SQ).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: This species breeds in the Pine Ridge and east to the NVP in the Niobrara River Valley; one was at the Preserve 16 Jun (MMc) and another was at Long Pine SRA 10 Jul (NV). At regular locations, 10 were counted at NNF Halsey 4 Jul (TH), and 2 were at Gordon Cem 5 Jun (CNK). Unexpected was a flightless juv in Seward 12 Jun (JG); prior probable nesting in the east involves 2 reports of nest-building in Lancaster Co 2010 and 2014 (CNK, LE) and the presence of at least one pair along with "raggedy juvs" in Omaha 2008-2012 (JR). Unexpected were 1-2 in an Ogallala yard 23 Jun-30 Jul (JO), and one in Lincoln 15 Jul (BWe) was the 4th Jul record in the east. Fall arrivals are in early Aug.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this uncommon northwestern breeder (subsp. *Sitta carolinensis nelsoni*) and common breeder elsewhere along major river valleys and in mature eastern forests (subsp. *S. c. cookei*).

Pygmy Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this fairly common Pine Ridge and Wildcat Hills breeder.

Brown Creeper: None were reported of this rare northern and eastern breeder.

Rock Wren: Ads were feeding 3 nestlings at LM 12 Jul (NWa), a bit late for this species. None were reported east of Frontier Co, where one was found 13 Jun (TJW), within the expected summer range.

House Wren: Unexpected was a pair nesting in a nest box that had just fledged Black-capped Chickadees in Lincoln 1 Jul (TEL). Last egg dates for House Wrens are near the end of Jul (fide WM), and so a pair working on a 2nd brood in Adams Co 23 Jul (FMa) was pushing the envelope.

Sedge Wren: This species is known for migrating through Nebraska in spring, returning in numbers in the east beginning mid-Jul, establishing territories and breeding. Thus reports in Jun are likely local breeders, an uncommon occurrence, especially in the southeast; there were singing birds in Saunders Co 23 Jun (SMa) and Wayne Co 8 Jun (WF). Three singing males in northern Thayer Co 3 Jul (JGJ) may have been returnees rather than local Jun nesters.

Marsh Wren: Although Marsh Wrens can occur anywhere in the state in summer in cattail marshes, this is not an extensive habitat in the southeast. Even in the RWB, birds are not usually heard until mid-summer, analogous to the Sedge Wren pattern, and so singing birds at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, in early Jun and on 20 Jun (TLG, JGJ) were noteworthy.

Carolina Wren: This species breeds most years within the area bounded by Cuming, Lancaster, and Jefferson Cos, but each year there are numerous sporadic summer and breeding reports north and west of this area. This summer, one was singing in southwestern Franklin Co 7 Jul (D&JP), and singles were at Fairmont 30 Jun (JRi), in Dawson Co 6 Jul (CGo), and in Blaine Co 3 Jul (AHo). An apparent 2nd brood attempt was being made by a pair in Bellevue 21 Jul (ARy).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: This species is in the process of encircling the Sandhills, as it occurs north to the Pine Ridge in the west and in the east along the Missouri and Niobrara River Valleys west to Ft. Niobrara NWR in Cherry Co. Consolidation is occurring in the stretch from Niobrara Valley Preserve to Ft. Niobrara; there were 5 reports of up to 4 birds there 14-29 Jun (m. ob.). In the Pine Ridge, it occurs eastward to CSP, where 2 were seen 11 Jun (TJW). It now occupies virtually all of the area south of the Platte River.

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine for this common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

Mountain Bluebird: Reports were routine for this fairly common western breeder.

Swainson's Thrush: None were reported of this common statewide migrant. Last dates are in early Jun east and central, mid-Jun in the west.

Wood Thrush: Reports were routine for this uncommon eastern and northern breeder.

American Robin: Reports were routine for this common statewide breeder.

Gray Catbird: This species is uncommon on the Pine Ridge and rare in the southern Panhandle. The 2 reports from the west were from the Pine Ridge in Dawes Co: singles at CSP 11 Jun (TJW) and Ponderosa WMA 10 Jun (TJW).

Brown Thrasher: Reports were routine for this common statewide breeder.

Sage Thrasher: Only the 9th and 10th summer records (2 Jun-18 Jul) for the state were singles in southwest Scotts Bluff Co 22 Jun (CNK) and Morrill Co 2 Jul (SB).

Northern Mockingbird: The stronghold for this species in Nebraska is the southeast; 16 were in Nemaha and Pawnee Cos 20 Jun (CNK) and 15 in southeast Thayer Co 8 Jul (D&JP). Fewest numbers occur in the north and northwest; one was at Valentine NWR 14 Jul (CRi).

European Starling: Reports were routine for this common statewide breeder.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine for this fairly common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: This species breeds in the north eastward to Holt Co, but there are few reports between there and the Panhandle. One was at Powderhorn North, about 6 miles northwest of Merritt Res dam 19 Jun (CRi).

McCown's Longspur: Reports were routine for this fairly common western Panhandle breeder.

Ovenbird: Apparently the only summer record from NNF Halsey was in 1993, and so the numbers reported there in 2014 and this summer are a major surprise. Following the 7 there in 2014, one was found 16 Jun this summer (TJW), and careful counts on 4 Jul this year tallied 11 individuals (TH). These reports, along with another at Pressey WMA, Custer Co, 28 Jun (LR, RH) signal a major influx to the Loup Drainage, and likely the first breeding. Also indicative of range expansion was one singing in Jefferson Co as late as 21 Jul (CNK); this is only the 2nd summer report since the 1970s west of the lower Missouri and lower Platte River Valleys.

Louisiana Waterthrush: Despite sightings in 6 locations this spring at FF, reports were received from only one of these this summer: a persistent bird was still singing at the Gifford Road railroad crossing 15 Jul (AG) and one was there 11-16 Apr (m. ob.). No nests or juvs were reported from FF. On the other hand, at traditional locations at ICSP and PRSP, 6 and 4 territories were monitored through the summer (SSc, JC). At least 5 juvs in all were seen on 2 of the 6 ICSP territories 3 and 14 Jun (SSc, JC). At PRSP, juvs were seen on 2 of the 4 territories (SSc, JC). A map of the PRSP territories was published in *The Nebraska Bird Review* Vol. 82 (2), page 66.

Northern Waterthrush: One in Dixon Co 4 Jun (JJ) tied for 4th-latest in spring. Expected last dates are 27-29 May.

Black-and-white Warbler: This species breeds in the Niobrara River Valley west to Cherry Co, but is sporadic at best as a breeder in the lower Missouri River Valley. One in Omaha 17 Jun (RBr) was one of a few records from that area, but was likely a migrant rather than a local breeder. One in Buffalo Co 13 Jun (BBr) was likely a late migrant.

Prothonotary Warbler: No reports were received; in spring nest-building was underway at FF.

Tennessee Warbler: The only report was of an early migrant banded at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 25 Jul (RS). This is the earliest fall record by 16 days; expected arrival is 12-18 Aug.

MacGillivray's Warbler: None were reported; last spring dates for this uncommon western migrant are 3-8 Jun.

Kentucky Warbler: The usual numbers were at ICSP, where up to 5 were found during the period (SSc), and at PRSP 1-2 during Jul (SSc), fewer than in recent years. One in Cass Co 28 Jun was unexpected but well seen (GWe).

Common Yellowthroat: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Hooded Warbler: This species has a propensity to appear almost anywhere in the state in spring and early summer. This summer's version sang vigorously at NNF Halsey 16 Jun-4 Jul (TJW, m. ob.). The only other report was of one heard at FF 13 Jun (JR). These are only the 6th and 7th reports for Jun in Nebraska (and first for Jul).

American Redstart: Reports were routine of this common northern and eastern breeder.

Northern Parula: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern breeder.

Yellow Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: At the east end of the Pine Ridge breeding range were 3 in east Ash Canyon 13 Jul (KDy) and 2 at CSP the same day (SDa).

Yellow-throated Warbler: None were reported of this local and uncommon southeastern breeder despite the presence of about 6 at FF during the spring.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Reports from easterly parts of the breeding range were of singles in Harlan Co 27 Jun (BBr) and Antelope Co 28 Jul (WF).

Eastern Towhee: Several reports exemplified the large overlap between the distribution of phenotypes of this species and Spotted Towhee in the state. Reports were west to Gosper Co 10 Jun (RSt), Dawson Co a pair 6 Jul (CGo), Thomas Co 25 Jun (JDa), and near NNF McKelvie, Cherry Co, 26 Jun (CRi). The last few years seem to indicate some westward expansion of Eastern Towhee.

Cassin's Sparrow: The only report of this sporadic southwestern breeder was from Dundy Co, where they were "not as numerous as last year"; 2 were found on a BBS route there 15 Jun (JGJ).

Chipping Sparrow: This species is least numerous in summer in the southern 2 rows of counties west of Harlan Co; reports from that area were of 3 in Hitchcock Co 12 Jun (TJW), 2-4 in Frontier Co 1-7 Jun (TJW), and 1-5 in Gosper Co 10-19 Jun (WWH, RSt). These reports suggest that this last part of the state is gradually being occupied.

Brewer's Sparrow: The only reports were from the regular but rarely-checked western Panhandle breeding range: one was in northwest Sioux Co 29 Jun (LE) and "multiple" birds were near the Niobrara River in Sioux Co 13 Jul (MB).

Field Sparrow: This species is a rare breeder in the Panhandle, with the few existing records from the Pine Ridge. One near Agate Fossil Beds, Sioux Co, 2 Jun (EJo) was probably still migrating.

Vesper Sparrow: Two in Dawson Co 31 Jul (DVe) were in a part of the state where breeding is uncommon. Most breeders are in the north, northwest, and east.

Lark Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common breeder north and west, fairly common elsewhere.

Lark Bunting: Only the 9th summer record east of the breeding range was a well-described male in Richardson Co 11 Jul (BP, details). There are an additional 20 records for spring and fall in the southeast.

Savannah Sparrow: This species is a local breeder in the north and west; 1-2 pairs were at the same location 12 Jun near Hay Springs where they have been found since 2011 (WM).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Numbers of this species in northern grasslands are very high; one survey found 46 singing males at a single survey point near NNF McKelvie 19 Jun (CRi); the observer recorded 20+ singing males at several additional points.

Henslow's Sparrow: Reports were from probably the two most reliable areas to find this species: Burchard L SRA, Pawnee Co, and Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co. At Burchard, 2 were found 13 Jul (TG), and at SCP the 12 reports through the period were topped by a high count of 8 on 19 Jun (KP, m. ob.).

Song Sparrow: Song Sparrow is uncommon to rare as a breeder in the Panhandle and south of the Platte River Valley west of Phelps and Harlan Cos. There were no reports from those areas this summer.

Swamp Sparrow: This is an uncommon breeder in central Nebraska, generally found in cattail marshes. The only 2 reports were from this breeding range: 2 were in Lincoln Co 8 Jun (TJW) and one was at LO 11 Jun (RTy).

White-throated Sparrow: The only report was of a singing late migrant in Dodge Co 9 Jun (D&JP); there are 4 later dates 10-22 Jun. Usual last dates are 31 May-2 Jun.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: None were reported of this fairly common northwestern breeder.

Summer Tanager: Reports were routine of this uncommon southeastern breeder.

Scarlet Tanager: This species breeds regularly west along the Niobrara River Valley to Niobrara Valley Preserve, but there are a few reports farther west into eastern Cherry Co. One was singing east of Smith Falls 20 Jun (MMc).

Western Tanager: This species is a Pine Ridge specialist; easternmost was one near Whiteclay 21 Jul (PMH). Breeding is not known to occur in the Wildcat Hills, but one there 2 Jul (JMu fide AF) was the 3rd record there for Jul, suggestive of breeding.

Northern Cardinal: There are only sporadic reports west of the Valentine area along the Niobrara River Valley and on the Pine Ridge, although it has occurred west to Sioux Co, including about 4 reports from the CSP vicinity. This summer 2 were at CSP 10-11 Jun (TJW).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Reports at the west edge of the summer range were of singles in Nuckolls Co 10-11 Jul (DE) and, in the Platte River Valley, 2 at Ft. Kearny SRA, Kearney Co, 15 Jul (DOv, JKa) and one there 13 Jun (BBr).

Black-headed Grosbeak: In the Platte River Valley region this species breeds east to Buffalo and Phelps Cos, but a straggler was seen east to Hamilton Co 3 Jun (IBa).

Blue Grosbeak: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder.

Lazuli Bunting: The breeding range includes the Panhandle and Niobrara River Valley east to the NVP; one was at the Preserve 19 Jun (MMc). Easterly, probably a late migrant, was one near Superior 2 Jun (RSt).

Indigo Bunting: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

Dickcissel: Occurrence in the Panhandle is sporadic and greatly variable in numbers from year to year. This summer there were 10 reports of 1-2 birds 10 Jun-13 Jul (m. ob.), a good number of sightings, but low numbers.

Bobolink: By late Jul Bobolinks flock and begin molt. A flock of 21 in "non-breeding" plumage in Lancaster Co 29 Jul (SSc) fit this pattern.

Red-winged Blackbird: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Eastern Meadowlark: Numbers are low in the southwest and the species may only occur there in wetter years; one in Hitchcock Co 12 Jun (TJW) was only the 4th summer record west of Harlan Co.

Western Meadowlark: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common, locally abundant, statewide breeder.

Brewer's Blackbird: This species breeds in extreme northwest Nebraska only and summer reports away from there are essentially non-existent. I received several such reports from the east and south-central, most from visiting birders and without details or photographs, of birds that seemed to me to be far more likely to be Common Grackles.

Common Grackle: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide breeder.

Great-tailed Grackle: Numbers are lowest in the western Sandhills; reports included 2 in Grant Co 11 Jun (TJW), one at Smith L SRA, Sheridan Co, 6 Jun (AK), one at Thedford 16 Jun (WZw), 2 at NNF McKelvie 19 Jun (CRi), and 2 at Oshkosh 20 Jun (ADu, KMo). A drive through Grant and Sheridan Co 13 Jul yielded 6 in each county (KD).

Brown-headed Cowbird: Fall flocking of juvs can begin as early as late Jun; a flock of 200 cowbirds was in Custer Co 18 Jul (TH).

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

Bullock's Oriole: Males of this species depart rather early in fall towards the southwest US on molt migration; all of the summering males had departed from a Mitchell yard by 25 Jul (KD).

Baltimore Oriole: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central breeder, uncommon west.

House Finch: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Red Crossbill: Of the few reports received, easternmost were one at Ogallala Strip WMA, Keith Co, 11 Jun (TBa), 2 at NNF Halsey 15 Jun (TJW), and a single at NNF Halsey 4 Jul (TH).

Pine Siskin: One at a Dixon Co feeder 8 Jun was the "latest ever in my yard" (JJ); last dates away from breeding areas are 15-18 Jun. A good population breeds at Halsey NNF; 4 were there 16 Jun (TJW).

Lesser Goldfinch: The few reports were of 1-3 birds, including at least one each of black-backed and green-backed males, at WHNC through the period (TG, KD, L&BP). This species now occurs yearly in summer in Scotts Bluff Co.

American Goldfinch: Reports were routine of this common statewide breeder.

House Sparrow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide resident.

2014 (26th) REPORT OF THE NOU RECORDS COMMITTEE

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The functions and methods of the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC) are described in its bylaws (NOURC 2010). The committee's purpose is to provide a procedure for documenting unusual bird sightings and to establish a list of all documented birds for Nebraska. Accidental and casual species for which the NOURC seeks documentation (NOURC Review List) can be found at the NOU website (www.NOUbirds.org).

All records mentioned here are available to interested persons at the NOU archives at the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM), Lincoln, NE. Interested parties should contact the current NOU Librarian, whose address can be found in the latest issue of *The Nebraska Bird Review* (NBR).

State List:

The "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" was first published in 1988 (NOU 1988) and has been updated three times (NOURC 1997, 2004, 2009). The "Official List" has been appended twenty-four times: (Mollhoff 1989; Grenon 1990, 1991; Gubanyi 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Brogie 1997, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b; 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014; Jorgensen 2001, 2002, 2003).

The American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds, Seventh Edition (1998) and its following supplements: (AOU: 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014), contain many taxonomic changes affecting North American birds.

The following summarizes all revisions made by the AOU in 2014 including scientific name changes and taxonomic realignment that affect the current published "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009" (NOURC 2009, www.NOUbirds.org). This report includes all accounts submitted during the 2014 calendar year covering 84 records with accession numbers 1607 - 1690.

Criteria for Accepted Records:

In order for a record to be accepted, a minimum of six votes in favor is required with no more than one dissenting vote (NOURC 2010). Records in the following categories are classified as accepted:

I-S - a diagnostic, labeled specimen exists
I-P - diagnostic, labeled photographic evidence exists
I-R - a diagnostic, labeled recording exists
II - three or more independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist
III - one or two independently written diagnostic documentations of the same bird exist

Each account of an accepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and initial(s) of observers. This report summarizes all records accessioned in 2014, discusses any new additions to the state list, and reports any changes in firmness of data (i.e. placement in the above acceptance categories) of Nebraska birds. Additionally, the list reflects changes in frequency of occurrence, as determined by the NOU Records Committee, which reviewed records of bird occurrences in Nebraska for 2005-2014. Frequency of occurrence is indicated by the following terms (NOURC 2009):

Regular - acceptably reported in 9-10 of the past 10 years.
Casual - acceptably reported in 4-7 of the past 10 years.
Accidental - acceptably reported in 0-2 of the past 10 years.
Extirpated - not acceptably reported in the past 50 years.
Extinct - no longer found alive anywhere in the world.

The frequency of occurrence for any species that is acceptably reported in 3 or 8 of the last 10 years is discussed by the committee and placed in a category felt most appropriate by the committee.

With this report, the following changes are made to "The Official List of the Birds of Nebraska: 2009" (NOURC 2009).

2014 Additions to the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska":

There were two new species added to the Nebraska "Official List" in 2014.

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

1. The first NOURC accepted record of Mute Swan is represented by photographs, video, and a description (Class 1-P, MAB) of a pair (male and female) of adult birds present on a remote farm pond in Dixon Co., 07 November 2014. Both swans were unbanded, each had both halluces (hind-toes) and both were capable of strong flight. These factors in conjunction with the birds' age, sexes, timing of the sighting, remoteness of the sighting

location, birds' appearance and association with other migrating waterfowl, the birds' wary behavior, and the increasing numbers of this species in eastern North America were believed indicative of wild provenance. Accession # 1680.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*)

1. A Brown Booby, discovered at Hansen Lake, Sarpy Co., 28-30 June 2014 constitutes the first *Sulidae* record for Nebraska. Photographs (Class I-P, JBe via DC, JR) were received of an adult male Brown Booby of the nominate Atlantic race *S. l. leucogaster*, taken 30 June 2014. Accession # 1649.

*** With these two additions, the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" now stands at **461** species.

Changes Involving Nebraska Species Due to Taxonomic Revisions (AOU 2014):

The Fifty-fifth supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 2014) has effected the following change to the "Official List of the Birds of Nebraska" (www.noubirds.org).

1. Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) becomes (*R. crepitans*).
   Clapper Rail (*R. longirostris*) is split into three species, two of which occur in North America. Ridgway's Rail (*R. obsoletus*), mostly a salt-water species occurs in western Mexico, Arizona and California while Clapper Rail (*R. crepitans*) occurs along the Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico shoreline. The single record for Clapper Rail for Nebraska is that of a specimen (UNSM ZM14120) caught in a mink trap east of Stapleton, Logan Co., 30 January 1951. Examination of this specimen confirmed its identity as belonging to the Atlantic Coast subspecies *R. c. crepitans* (Rapp and Rapp 1951).

2014 Changes in Frequency of Occurrence:

1. Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) changed from Extirpated to Accidental, based on acceptance on 26 May 2013 record (Brogie 2014)
2. Common Crane (*Grus grus*) changed from Accidental to Casual
3. Pomarine Jaeger (*Stercorarius pomarinus*) changed from Casual to Accidental
4. Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) changed from Accidental to Casual
5. Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) changed from Casual to Accidental

6. Virginia's Warbler (*Oreothlypis virginiae*) changed from Casual to Accidental
7. Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*) changed from Casual to Accidental

2014 Accepted Records:

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*)

1. Two birds were photographed (Class I-P, RR via MV) at Methodist Cove, Harlan County Reservoir, Harlan Co., 25 July 2014. Accession # 1657.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

1. A written description (Class III, EB) of a drake at Walnut Creek SRA, Sarpy Co., 21 February 2014 was received. The description of the hen associated with this bird did not contain enough details to be accepted by the NOURC. Accession # 1610.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, JR) at Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 12 January 2014. Accession # 1608.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, MW) were received of the Carter Lake bird, 22 February 2014. Accession # 1609.

Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*)

The following represents the second record for this species in Nebraska.

1. Photographs (Class I-P, JR) were received of a juvenile/female bird observed at La Platte Bottoms, Sarpy Co., 11 July 2014. Accession # 1650.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, MAB) of the above bird from 11 July 2014 were received. Accession # 1651.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*)

1. A single adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, MD via CK) at Boyer Chute NWR, Washington Co., 04 June 2014. This represents Nebraska's third record for this species. Accession # 1642.

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

1. A photograph (Class I-P, MW) was received of a single bird at the Sutherland Reservoir Cooling Basin, Lincoln Co., 29 December 2014. This represents the first winter record for this species in Nebraska. Accession # 1687.

Common Crane (*Grus grus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, MAB) were received of a single bird found northwest of the I-80 Elm Creek exit, Buffalo Co., 05 April 2014. This species is now considered casual in Nebraska, although the number of individuals represented is unknown. Accession # 1619.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*)

1. A photograph (Class I-P, MW) was received of a juvenile discovered at Capitol Beach Lake, Lancaster Co., 29 August 2014. Accession # 1662.
2. An additional photograph (Class I-P, NA) of the above bird taken later in the day was also received. Accession # 1663.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, JTr) were received of a single bird observed by members of the Colorado Field Ornithologists convention field trip to Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 04 September 2014. Accession # 1668.

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*)

A single bird in juvenile plumage observed below Gavins Pt. Dam, Cedar Co. was well documented.

1. Photographs (Class I-P, KP) 01 September 2014. Accession # 1664.
2. A single photograph (Class I-P, MAB) 02 September 2014. Accession # 1665.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, MW) 01 September 2014. Accession # 1666.
4. A series of photographs (Class I-P, JC, ShS) 02 September 2014. Accession # 1667.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

1. A second-cycle bird (found 27 May 2014, JR) was photographed (Class I-P, BrP) at Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 28 May 2014. Accession # 1636.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, JR) of the above bird, by the original observer, were taken 28 May 2014. Accession # 1637.
3. An additional photograph (Class I-P, MW) from 29 May 2014 of the Carter Lake bird was also received. Accession # 1639.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*)

1. A video and photographs (Class I-P, JGJ) were received of an adult (Kumlien's) bird at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 22 March 2014. Accession # 1614.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, MW) were received of the above bird, 23 March 2014. Accession # 1615.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, SM) were received of a third-cycle (Kumlien's) gull observed at Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 24 March 2014. Accession # 1616.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class I-P, GB, JB) at the K-1 Cabin Area, Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 29 June 2014. This represents the fourth NOURC accepted record of this species for Nebraska. Accession # 1647.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Selasphorus calliope*)

1. An adult male was photographed (Class I-P, GB, JB) at the K-1 Cabin Area, Lake McConaughy, Keith Co., 25 July 2014. Accession # 1656.

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*)

The following would document the 3rd and 4th records for this species in Nebraska (assuming the following represent a single individual of each gender).

1. A written description (Class III, JBi) of an adult male bird observed in East Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co., 04 June 2014. Accession # 1659.
2. A written description (Class III, ND) of an adult male bird observed in East Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co., 13 September 2014. Accession # 1672.
3. A photograph (Class I-P, SJD) of an adult male observed in East Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co., 22 September 2014. Accession # 1673.
4. A photograph (Class I-P, MAB) of an adult female adult observed in East Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co., 19 October 2014. Accession # 1675.
5. Additional photographs (Class I-P, EMB) of the female, 19 October 2014. Accession # 1676.
6. Another set of photographs (Class I-P, BH) of the female, 19 October 2014. Accession # 1677.
7. A photograph/video (Class I-P, JGJ) of the female at the above location, 24 October 2014. Accession # 1678.

Dusky Flycatcher (*Empidonax oberholseri*)

1. A written description (with wing/culmen measurements) and a series of photographs (Class I-P, JL) were received of a bird netted/banded at Chadron State Park, Dawes Co., 10 September 2014. Accession # 1670.

White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*)

1. A description (Class III, MAB) was received of a singing adult male observed near Lynch, Boyd Co., 11 May 2014. Accession # 1626.
2. A description (Class III, MW) was received of a male bird observed at Pioneers Park, Lancaster Co., 01 May 2014. Accession # 1646.

Steller's Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, SM) along Old Stage Hill Road, Scotts Bluff Co., 3 January 2014. Accession # 1607.

Mountain Chickadee (*Poecile gambeli*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, MW) in Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co., 21 December 2014. Accession # 1686.

Canyon Wren (*Catherpes mexicanus*)

1. A written description (Class III, KDy) was received of a single bird observed at Gotte Park, Kimball Co., 31 August 2014. This represents the fourth NOURC accepted record for Canyon Wren in Nebraska. Accession # 1689.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*)

1. A single bird was photographed (Class I-P, VC) north of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 20 November 2014. Accession # 1682.

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

1. Photographs (Class I-P, RM, SM) were received of at least one bird encountered at Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co., 11 October 2014. Accession # 1674.

Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)

1. A description (Class III, JR) was received of an adult observed near Orchard Hill, Douglas Co., NE, 13 May 2014. Accession # 1629.
2. A written description (Class III, MAB) was received of an adult male bird observed during the 2014 NOU Spring Field Trip at Hummel Park, Omaha, Douglas Co., 17 May 2014. Accession # 1634.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*)

1. A description (Class III, JT) was received of an adult bird observed south of the I-680 Bridge along the Missouri River in Douglas Co., 22 May 2014. Accession # 1648.

Cape May Warbler (*Setophaga tigrina*)

An adult male bird found (JR) 09 May 2014 at Towl Park, Omaha, Douglas County, was well documented.

1. A photograph (Class I-P, CO) 10 May 2014. Accession # 1623.
2. A photograph (Class I-P, JG) 14 May 2014. Accession # 1630.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, PS) 15 May 2014. Accession # 1631.
4. A photograph (Class I-P, AS) 16 May 2014. Accession # 1633.
5. A photograph (Class I-P, TC) 16 May 2014. Accession # 1635.

Another 2014 Cape May Warbler was found in Lancaster County, Nebraska.

6. A description/photograph (Class I-P, JK, MW) was received of an adult male at Pawnee Lake SRA, Lancaster Co., 11 May 2014. Accession # 1624.

Prairie Warbler (*Setophaga discolor*)

1. A written description (Class III, JK, MW) was received of a singing adult male at Pawnee Lake SRA, Lancaster Co., 11 May 2014. The last NOURC accepted record of this species was 06 May 2000 (Jorgensen 2002). Accession # 1625.

Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (Class I-P, VC) north of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 26 August 2014. Accession # 1658.

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*)

1. A description was received of an adult male (Class III, DA) and possible female (description lacking; no vote) along Hwy 81, just north of mile marker 13, near Hebron, Thayer Co., 19 June 2014. Accession # 1643.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

The second NOURC accepted record of this species was well documented.

1. A female was photographed (Class I-P, LD via TJW) at a feeder southeast of North Platte, Lincoln Co., 15 February 2014. Accession # 1684.
2. Additional photographs (Class I-P, PD) were received of the above bird observed 16 December 2014. Accession # 1685.
3. Photographs (Class I-P, MAB) were received of the above bird taken 30 December 2014. Accession # 1688.

Unaccepted Records:

Records in the following categories are considered unaccepted (NOURC 2010):

IV - probably correct, but not beyond reasonable doubt.
V - a record with insufficient evidence to support the identification claimed.
VI - a probable released or escaped bird or mistaken identification.

Each account of an unaccepted record includes a brief statement noting the species, class, date, location, and reasons for the committee's non-acceptance of the record.

Unaccepted Records (Received in 2014):

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*)

1. Distant photographs of a group of three birds seen April 2014 in Colfax County were lacking in detail as to identity of the species and/or wild provenance. Class VI - Accession # 1638.

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

1. A set of photographs taken 06 November 2014 by one of the original observers of the Dixon County birds (discussed above) failed to show legs or feet. The possession/lack of toe-clipping and leg bands may help to distinguish possible captive/wild provenance. Class VI - Accession # 1679.

Mottled Duck (*Anas fulvigula*)

1. Photographs taken at La Platte Bottoms, Sarpy Co., 11 July 2014 were believed by some NOURC members to be lacking in detail to rule out similar species. Class IV - Accession # 1652.

2. Additional photographs were received of a bird observed at the above location 12 July 2014. Several NOURC members believed these photos were lacking in detail for a positive stand-alone identification. Class IV - Accession # 1653.

American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*)

1. A written description of a bird observed in Howard Co., 23 March 2014 lacked details to rule out similar species. Class IV - Accession # 1654.

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*)

1. Photographs were received of a single bird observed at Pawnee Lake, Lancaster Co., 13 November 2014. Although very suggestive, several NOURC members believed the photographs provided were lacking in detail for stand-alone approval. Class IV - Accession # 1681.

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*)

1. A report was received of single bird seen in flight at Wilkinson WMA, Platte Co., 15 May 2014. Although very suggestive, several committee members believed the description provided was lacking in detail for approval. Accession # 1632.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*)

1. A dark juvenile, observed/photographed by several individuals at Capitol Beach Lake, Lancaster Co., 29 August 2014 was undoubtedly a Laughing Gull; however, several committee members believed that the two sets of photographs provided were lacking in detail for a definitive stand-alone identification. Class IV - Accession # 1660; Class 4 – Accession # 1661.

Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides*)

1. A single adult bird was photographed below Gavins Pt. Dam, Cedar Co., 29 March 2014. Although very suggestive of the species, several committee members believed the photographs provided were lacking in detail to rule out similar species. Class IV - Accession # 1683.
2. A first-cycle bird was photographed at Branched Oak Lake, Lancaster Co., 29 March 2014. Although very suggestive for Iceland Gull (Kumlien's), several committee members believed the photographs provided were lacking in detail for stand-alone evidence. Class IV - Accession # 1690.

Glaucous-winged Gull (*Larus glaucescens*)

1. A first-cycle basic individual was photographed at N.P Dodge Park, Douglas Co., 02 April 2014. Although very suggestive, the photographs/description provided were lacking details for approval. Class 4 - Accession # 1617.
2. Additional photographs of the above bird, 03 April 2014 were also received. These also were very suggestive of the species, but lacked detail to rule out hybridization. Class IV - Accession # 1618.

Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*)

1. Although very suggestive of the species, several committee members believed the photographs submitted were lacking in detail for stand-alone approval. Class IV - Accession # 1669.

Non-Review List Records Submitted in 2014: Filed Without Votes:

The following records are of species not on the NOURC Review List but have been accessioned due to other circumstances (out-of range, non-normal date of occurrence, unusual nesting record, etc.). These records have been filed without NOURC votes.

Greater Prairie-Chicken (*Tympanuchus cupido*)

1. A photograph (SS) was received of a male bird "booming" along HWY 275, south of Beemer, Cuming Co., 19 March 2014. Accession # 1613.
2. A photograph (EMB) was received of a male bird "sounding off" along Hwy 15, north of Wayne, Wayne Co., 06 April 2014. Accession # 1620.

Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

1. An adult bird was photographed (MAB) at Lake Yankton, Cedar Co., 14 September 2014. Adult Sabine's Gulls are infrequently encountered in Nebraska. Accession # 1671.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*)

1. Photographs of a possible second-year bird (JR) from Carter Lake, Douglas Co., 13 March 2014 were filed. Accession # 1612.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

1. A written description (SM) of an adult breeding bird observed near the eastern side of Tamora WPA, Seward Co., 21 June 2014 was received. Accession # 1644.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*)

1. A single recently fledged bird was photographed (JGJ) on the UNK Campus, Buffalo Co., 14 July 2014. This species is an infrequent breeding species in Nebraska. Accession # 1655.

Northern Saw-Whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*)

1. Photographs (WJM) were received of four chicks and an un-hatched egg in a nest-box in Scotts Bluff Co., NE, 10 May 2014. This represents the first verified nesting record for this species in Nebraska (Mollhoff 2014). Accession # 1627.
2. Additional (13 May 2014) photographs (KD, WJM) of the above young were also received. Accession # 1628.

3. One additional photograph (MW) of a juvenile at the above location, 25 May 2014 was filed. Accession # 1640.

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

1. A description (RH, LR) of a westward adult male observed near Hebron, Thayer Co., 22 June 2014 was received. Accession # 1645.

Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*)

1. A photograph (KD) was filed of a westward bird found east of Scottsbluff, Scotts Bluff Co., 04 May 2014. Accession # 1622.

Cassin's Sparrow (*Peucaea cassinii*)

1. A recording (MS) of a singing male near Cody, Cherry Co., 05 June 2014 was received. This represents the most northeastward record for this species in Nebraska. Accession # 1641.

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*)

1. An eastward adult male was photographed (CK) south of the Platte River near Bellevue, Cass Co., 28 April 2014. Accession # 1621.

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

1. A written description (TH) was received of an eastward adult male bird at Moore Farm Hilltop, Douglas Co., 15 June 2001. Accession # 1611.

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2014 NOURC Members:

Mark A. Brogie (chair), Joe Gubanyi, Tim Hajda, Joel Jorgensen, Loren Padelford, Justin Rink, Kent Skaggs, and T.J. Walker

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First Nesting Record and Status Review of the Glossy Ibis in Nebraska

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INTRODUCTION

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) is believed to be a recent colonist from the Old World whose numbers have increased and range has expanded in North America over the past two centuries (Patten and Lasley 2000). Glossy Ibis range expansion has been described as involving periods of relative stability followed by periods of rapid increase (Patten and Lasley 2000). Prior to the 1980s, Glossy Ibis were primarily found in the southeastern United States and along the Atlantic Coast (Patten and Lasley 2000). In the mid- to late 1980s, Glossy Ibis began to rapidly increase and expand into Texas. By the early 1990s they were increasingly reported in the Great Plains (Thompson et al. 2011), particularly along the front range of Colorado and New Mexico (Patten and Lasley 2000).

In Nebraska, the first documented occurrence of Glossy Ibis was a single adult with 28 White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) at Wilkins Waterfowl Production Area (WPA), Fillmore County, 24 April 1999 (Jorgensen 2001). Since the initial record, the number of reports of Glossy Ibis has increased. Glossy Ibis status was elevated from accidental to casual by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (NOURC) in 2005 (Brogie 2005). Only a few years later in 2014, its status was elevated again from casual to regular and NOURC no longer sought documentation for sightings (Brogie 2014). In 2015, Jorgensen observed this species nesting in the Rainwater Basin. Given the recent observation of nesting, the rapid increase in annual observations, along with field identification challenges as a result of similarity to and hybridization with the White-faced Ibis, the status of the Glossy Ibis in Nebraska is in need of clarification. Here, we provide observational details about the first confirmed nesting by the species in Nebraska, review all reports of Glossy Ibis and apparent Glossy x White-faced Ibis hybrids and comment on this species' overall status in the state.

METHODS

Nesting observation

The Rainwater Basin is a relatively flat landscape in south-central Nebraska with numerous embedded playa wetlands whose water levels are variable and dependent on precipitation (LaGrange 2005, Jorgensen 2012). During June 2015, heavy rain fell over much of the Rainwater Basin. For example, Clay Center, Clay County, received a total of 8.5 inches during June which is 102% above the average June total precipitation for this location (U.S. Climate Data 2015). As a result of heavy rainfall, many Rainwater Basin wetlands received abundant runoff and had water levels above average (JGJ, personal observation). During July and August 2015, Jorgensen surveyed several wetlands in the Rainwater Basin for breeding birds. On 7 July, Harvard WPA, Clay County, was surveyed via kayak. We summarize Glossy Ibis observations from that survey.

Status review

We assembled documented and undocumented sightings of Glossy Ibis and possible Glossy x White-faced Ibis hybrids (herein referred to as hybrid ibis) from the following: NEBirds (an internet discussion group), eBird.org, seasonal field reports of the *Nebraska Bird Review,* and the NOURC (Nebraska Ornithologists' Union Records Committee) documentations for the years 1999-2015. Earlier reports (prior to 1999) of Glossy Ibis were addressed by Sharpe et al. (2001); all were considered to have resulted from confusion with White-faced Ibis and are not considered here. Two or more reports at one location separated by more than seven days were considered independent observations unless there was evidence to suggest that a single individual was involved.

Sightings evaluated by NOURC were not reviewed further to determine whether observers distinguished apparent Glossy Ibis from White-faced Ibis or hybrid ibis. The remaining sightings were evaluated by us in order to determine whether details provided by observers were sufficient to distinguish Glossy Ibis, White-faced Ibis, or hybrid ibis. A key field mark is the pattern and coloration of the facial skin (Kaufman and Peterson 1999). Adult White-faced Ibis in breeding plumage possess reddish facial skin bordered by white feathers at the base of the bill (Kaufman and Peterson 1999). Adult Glossy Ibis in breeding plumage possess a cobalt blue facial skin border at the base of the bill (Kaufman and Peterson 1999). Purported hybrid ibis in breeding plumage show intermediate characters including purplish facial skin (Arterburn and Grzybowski 2003). We summarize assembled information to show temporal and spatial occurrence patterns and trends of Glossy and hybrid ibis in Nebraska.

RESULTS

Nesting observations

The wetland at Harvard WPA was approximately 80% open water on 7 July 2015. Maximum depth was approximately 1.5 meters (5 ft). Areas with standing vegetation were restricted to the perimeter, where water extended into areas typically not inundated, including one large "island" of cattails (*Typha spp.*) and bulrush (*Scirpus spp.*) located in the interior of the wetland where nesting ibis were observed. Since a kayak was used, Jorgensen was able to slowly and quietly move through the vegetation and birds often did not flush until they observed him visually. Jorgensen flushed several *Plegadis* ibis and Black-crowned Night-Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) and located several White-faced Ibis nests, some with young. Jorgensen also observed a *Plegadis* ibis he recognized as a Glossy Ibis standing on what appeared to be a nest. Among other field marks, the adult ibis had cobalt blue facial skin. Once the bird flew, Jorgensen inspected the nest and found five light blue eggs. Jorgensen subsequently observed and photographed another adult Glossy Ibis standing on a nest with four eggs (NBR, Vol. 83 (1), page 25) as well as a third adult Glossy Ibis on a nest that contained four eggs. In total, Jorgensen observed approximately 70 adult White-faced and three adult Glossy Ibis, 11 White-faced and 3 Glossy Ibis nests, and 5 *Plegadis* ibis fledglings in the rookery. In addition, Jorgensen observed 38 (28 adults, 10 first-year birds) Black-crowned Night-Herons. A complete inventory of nests and young was not conducted to minimize disturbing the birds. Thus, the totals reported here probably represent only a proportion of the total number of nests.

Status review

We located 73 Glossy Ibis reports, 23 of which were accepted by NOURC (Table 1). Single documented reports were recorded 1999–2001, and there were no reports 2002-2003, but the number of annual reports increased sharply thereafter. Since 2004, the number of annual reports has ranged from 1 to 12 (mean = 6). Of the 73 records, 75.3% (n = 55) were from spring (April–May), 13.7% (n = 10) were from summer (June–July) and 11.0% (n = 8) were from fall (August–October). Of the 73 records, 67.1% (n = 49) were from the Rainwater Basin, 10.9% (n = 8) were from the Sandhills lakes of Sheridan and Garden Counties and 4.1% (n =3) were from areas near or portions of Lake McConaughy (Figure 1). The remaining thirteen records were distributed in other areas of the state. Glossy Ibis have been recorded in 19 of Nebraska's 93 counties. Two observers (JGJ, PD) reported 47 of the 73 (64.4%) reports.

Table 1. Glossy Ibis records for Nebraska 1999-2015. Records shaded are those accepted by NOURC. NOURC did not review records after 2013.

#	Date(s)	Location	County	Observer*
1999				
1	24 April	Wilkins WPA	Fillmore	JGJ
2000				
1	7 May	McMurtrey Refuge	Clay	JGJ
2001				
2	14-20 July	Harvard WPA	Clay	JGJ, WRS, SJD
2004				
1	21-22 May	Krause WPA	Fillmore	JGJ, PD
2005				
1	14 April -26 May	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD, JGJ, WRS, RE
1	3 May	Mallard Haven WPA	Fillmore	JGJ
1	19 May	Trumbull Basin	Adams	JGJ
1	19 Aug	near Hastings	Adams	PD
2006				
1	19 April	Harvard WPA	Clay	MS
5	6 May	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	3 May	Clear Creek WMA	Keith	JGJ, TJW
1	10 May	Weis WPA	Fillmore	JGJ
1	13 May	near Hastings	Adams	PD
1	15 May	Lake McConaughy	Keith	SJD
1	5 Oct	Rainwater Basin		JGJ
2007				
1	25 May	Fontenelle Forest	Sarpy	EB
1	2 June	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
2008				
1	3-4 May	Greenwing WPA	Clay	JGJ
1	16 May	Lake McConaughy	Keith	SJD
1	18 May	Mallard Haven WPA	Fillmore	JGJ
2	12-14 June	Hultine WPA	Clay	PD
1	27 July - 3 Aug	North Lake Basin WMA	Seward	JG, CNK, JGJ
1	3 Aug	La Platte Bottoms	Sarpy	MC
1	9-16 Aug	Straight Water WMA	Seward	JGJ
1	23 Aug	Tamora WPA	Seward	JG

2009				
1	23 April	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	26 April	County Line WPA	York	JGJ
2	30 April	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	CG
1	3 May	North Platte	Lincoln	TJW
1	9 May	Mallard Haven	Fillmore	JGJ
1	10-17 May	North Lake Basin	Seward	JGJ
1	14 May	County Line WPA	York	JGJ
2010				
1	24 April	Sprikerush WMA	York	JGJ
1	29 April	n. Garden Co.	Garden	CG
1	30 April	near Greenhead WMA	Clay	JGJ
1	30 April	Smith WPA	Clay	JGJ
1	30 April	Smartweed WMA	Nuckolls	JGJ
1	2 May	Verona Complex	Clay	JGJ
1	2 May	near Mitchell	Scotts Bluff	CG, KD, RS
1	3-8 May	North Lake Basin WMA	Seward	BP, LP, LE
1	3 May	Straight Water WMA	Seward	JGJ
1	6 May	n. Garden Co.	Garden	CG
2	17 May	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	LE
3	29 May	Deep Well WMA	Hamilton	JGJ
2011				
1	17 April	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	29 April	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	27 April	Fuchtman Playa	Antelope	MB
1	4 May	Kissinger Basin WMA	Clay	JGJ
1	7-14 May	Moger WPA	Clay	JGJ
2	17 May	Kissinger Basin WMA	Clay	PD, BF
1	18 July	Sacremento-Wilcox WMA	Phelps	WF
2012				
1	12-15 May	north of Lincoln	Lancaster	LE, EA, RSt
1	18-20 May	Bittern's Call WMA	Dawson	DL, TJW
2013				
1	14 May	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	20 July	Harvard WPA	Clay	PD
1	21 Aug	Jack Sinn WMA	Saunders	LE

2014				
1	20 April	Jack Sinn	Saunders	GR
1	27 April	Chilibaba	Scotts Bluff	KD, AK
1	5-9 May	Pawnee lake	Lancaster	MW, JK
1	14 May	Chilibaba	Scotts Bluff	AK
1	15 May	Medicine Creek Res.	Frontier	JGJ, TJW
1	16 May	Tamora WPA	Seward	KS
2015				
1	3 May	Real WPA	Fillmore	JGJ
3	8 May	Goehner basin	Seward	JGJ
1	12-15 May	North Lake Basin WMA	Seward	LE,JGJ
1	12 May	Marsh Duck WMA	York	JGJ
1	25 May	Straight Water WMA	Seward	NR
3	9 July	Harvard WPA	Clay	JGJ
1	24 July	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	JGJ
1	24 July	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	JGJ
1	24 July	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	JGJ
1	24 July	Sheridan Co	Sheridan	PH
1	16 Aug	Trumbull Basin	Adams	JGJ

Table 2. Hybrid ibis reports for 1999-2015.

#	Date	Year	Location	County	Observer*
1	6-May	2006	Harvard	Clay	JGJ
1	27-July - 3-August	2008	North Lake Basin WMA	Seward	JG, CNK, JGJ
1	7-May	2011	Moger WPA	Clay	JGJ
1	7-May	2011	Smith WPA	Clay	JGJ
1	25-Apr	2012	Goehner basin	Seward	JGJ
1	24-Jul	2015	Sheridan co	Sheridan	JGJ

*Observers: AK: Alice Kenitz, BP: Babs Padelford, BF: Bill Fink, CNK: Clem N. Klaphake, CG: Cory Gregory, DL: Dan Leger, EA: Edward Allen, EB: Elliott Bedows, GR: Gary Roberts, JGJ: Joel G. Jorgensen, JG: Joseph Gubanyi, JK: Jon King, KD: Kathy DeLara, KS: Kent Skaggs, LE: Larry Einemann, LP: Loren Padelford, MB: Mark Brogie, MC: Matthew Cvetas, MS: Michael Stromer, MW: Michael Willison, NR: Neal Ratzlaff, PD: Paul Dunbar, PH: Peter Hill, RE: Rick Eades, RS: Ruben Siegfried, RSt: Ruthie Stearns SJD: Stephen J. Dinsmore, TJW: T.J. Walker, WF: William Flack, WRS: W. Ross Silcock

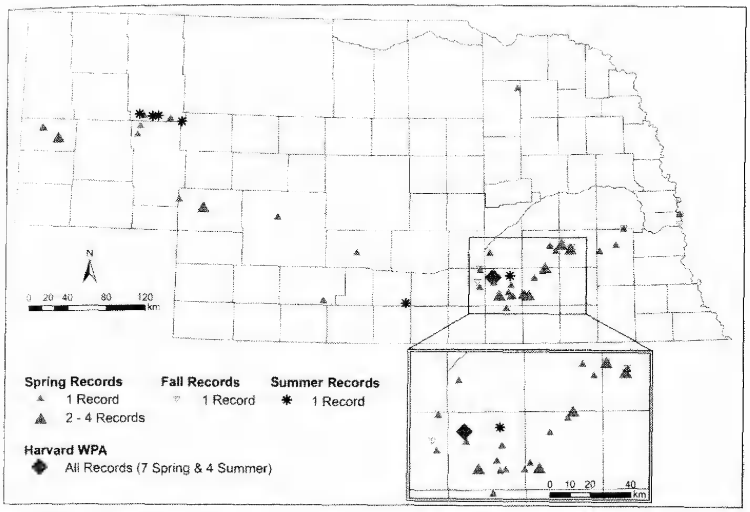
N
0 20 40 80 120
km
Spring Records
1 Record
2 - 4 Records
Fall Records
1 Record
Summer Records
1 Record
Harvard WPA
All Records (7 Spring & 4 Summer)
0 10 20 40
km

Figure 1. Spatial distribution of Glossy Ibis records in Nebraska 1999-2015. The inset shows a clustering of records in the eastern portion of the Rainwater Basin. Map by Lauren R. Dinan.

A few reports of Glossy Ibis prior to 2015 were suggestive of breeding. Two adults at Harvard WPA in 2001 were suspected of being part of a flock that was nesting earlier in the summer at Kissinger Basin Wildlife Management Area (WMA). In 2007, an adult Glossy Ibis was found in a White-faced Ibis nesting colony at Harvard WPA on 2 June by Paul Dunbar. Similarly, two adult Glossy Ibis were found with nesting White-faced Ibis at Hultine WPA 12-14 June (P. Dunbar, personal observation). However, in all of these instances direct evidence that Glossy Ibis were nesting was not observed.

We located seven reports of hybrid ibis, all of which were from 2006 – 2015 (Table 2). Five reports were from spring and two were from summer or early fall. All reports were during the period 25 April –3 August. All but one of these reports, a 2015 observation from the Sandhills lakes regions of Sheridan and Garden County, were from the Rainwater Basin.

DISCUSSION

Few species have undertaken a range expansion and population increase comparable to that of the Glossy Ibis in North America. Those which have are generally introduced species such as Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). However, the increase and expansion of the Glossy Ibis in the New World does share similarities to at least one other immigrant wading bird, the Cattle Egret. In Nebraska, we are aware of only one other species (Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*) that has gone from being unrecorded to attaining "regular" occurrence status during the past twenty-five years. Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus mexicanus*) and Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), both native species which now occur regularly, were first recorded in Nebraska in 1976 and 1984, respectively (Sharpe et al. 2001).

The discovery of Glossy Ibis nesting in Nebraska and the Rainwater Basin is not unexpected. In addition to other observations from the Rainwater Basin suggestive of nesting by Glossy Ibis, the species has also been found nesting elsewhere in the Great Plains. Glossy Ibis were suspected of breeding and hybridizing with White-faced Ibis in Oklahoma in 2002 (Arterburn and Grzybowski 2003), found breeding and hybridizing with White-faced Ibis in Wyoming in 2005 (Faulkner 2005), and was first documented nesting in South Dakota in 2012 (North American Birds 66:695). It should be noted that while direct evidence indicating Glossy Ibis nested in Nebraska was obtained in 2015, it is not known whether the Glossy Ibises observed were paired with other Glossy Ibises or whether one or all were part of mixed-species pairs with White-faced Ibis.

Hybridization between the two *Plegadis* ibis species presents identification challenges to birders and may lead to confusion about the status of the two species in Nebraska and the Great Plains. However, the number of reports of hybrid ibis has not kept pace with reports of Glossy Ibis in Nebraska. The limited number of reports may be due, in part, to birders overlooking or ignoring hybrid ibis, or as observed by Arterburn and Grzybowski (2003) in colonies in Texas in which both species nest and hybridization was not observed, hybridization is not common. Furthermore, Burger and Miller (1977) noted differences in nesting sites between the two species. In the Great Plains, hybridization may occur more frequently than elsewhere because of limited habitat and also the non-availability of mates since White-faced Ibis still greatly outnumber Glossy Ibis. We encourage birders to closely scrutinize, photograph, and report suspected hybrid ibis in the future.

White-faced Ibis numbers and breeding range have also increased greatly in the Great Plains in recent decades (Jorgensen and Dinsmore 2001). This may also be a factor in breeding interactions between the two species. Even though Nebraska's first nesting record for White-faced Ibis was from what is now Harvard WPA in the Rainwater Basin in 1916 (Swenk 1918), there were no other breeding records for this species in this region until 2001 when a small group nested at Kissinger Basin WMA, Clay County, (Jorgensen 2012). Since 2001, an additional eight nesting records have been tallied (Jorgensen 2012, JGJ personal observation). Thus, White-faced Ibis breeding status in the Rainwater Basin is rapidly evolving as well.

It is important to consider that spatial and temporal patterns of Glossy Ibis occurrence are likely biased by observers' distribution and effort in the state. This is particularly evident when noting that two observers who live near and spend substantial time birding in the Rainwater Basin were responsible for the overwhelming majority of reports. The absence of records from north-central Nebraska, including areas within and near Valentine National Wildlife Refuge where abundant wetland habitat is available, is possibly due to a limited number of observers birding in these areas.

Glossy Ibis in Nebraska are almost always reported with White-faced Ibis. White-faced Ibis are known to be fairly common migrants and occasional breeders in central and western Nebraska in appropriate habitat, specifically marshes and wetlands of the Sandhills (Sharpe et al. 2001). More recently, White-faced Ibis was noted to be very common during the summer of 2015 in the extensive wetlands of Garden and Sheridan Counties (Kenitz 2015; JGJ, personal observation). Four Glossy Ibises were found with White-faced Ibises when searched for during this period (JGJ, PH). Thus, we believe that the distribution and occurrence of Glossy Ibis is similar to the distribution and occurrence of White-faced Ibis in the state, although numbers of the latter are lower.

The initial documented occurrences, subsequent increase in reports, and confirmed nesting of the Glossy Ibis in Nebraska is arguably one of the more notable series of events of avian occurrences observed in the state during the past twenty-five years. The true status of the Glossy Ibis in Nebraska is possibly confounded by similarity in some plumages to White-faced Ibis, hybridization with White-faced Ibis, and also observer distribution relative to ibis distribution in the state. However, we conclude the evidence suggests Glossy Ibis is currently an uncommon spring migrant, rare summer visitor, and rare fall migrant in Nebraska. Additional observations supported by identification details (e.g., photos) are needed to further clarify this species' evolving occurrence and distribution in the state. We anticipate that Glossy Ibis will continue to increase and may eventually become a fairly common or even common spring and fall migrant and regular breeder in the state.

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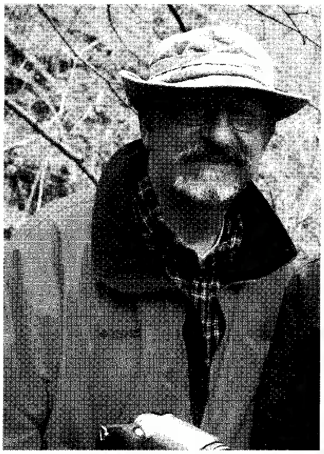
In Memory of Roland E. Barth

by Neal Ratzlaff



On September 21, 2015, the NOU and the conservation community lost a good friend with the passing of Roland Barth. Barth served 30 years as a meteorologist in the US Air Force, achieving the rank of Colonel. Tours of duty included 5 states and Europe. He was also a Vietnam veteran and was awarded the Bronze Star and Legion of Merit. Other decorations include two Defense Meritorious Service Medals and the Air Force Commendation Medal.

Retirement allowed Roland to pursue his interest in nature and use his considerable leadership and organizational skills for the benefit of a number of conservation groups. He was a member of the NOU for over 20 years and served a term as a Director from 2008-11. This was a time when the need arose for the NOU to redo its web site and Roland quietly stepped in to guide the effort, which produced a very functional site and skilled web manager to implement it.

The Audubon Society of Omaha was also a beneficiary of his leadership skills. As finance chair in the early 1990's when ASO was the recipient of a sizable bequest, he instituted a plan which included professional management, thereby providing a stable source of funds for the organization. He also served ASO as its president from 1992-94.

Roland enjoyed walking and could reliably be found on the trails at Fontenelle Forest carrying his binoculars and, most notably, his camera. In response to questions about plant identification from visitors, Roland began photographing plants and placing photographs in a reference notebook on the admissions desk at the Forest. Roland's fertile mind was always brimming with ideas, one of those being how nice it would be to have a book that would include all the plants in it. So when funds became available he and a friend with a long-time interest in plants, whom Roland had already recruited for work on the notebook, co-authored two field guides: *Wildflowers of Fontenelle Forest and Neale Woods* (2003) and *Trees, Shrubs, Woody Vines, Grasses, Sedges and Rushes of Fontenelle Forest and Neale Woods* (2007). But Roland wasn't done. During the production of the book, the 'digital revolution' progressed to mobile devices, and a new vision surfaced, one that involved images and descriptions not just of plants, but of ALL species and could be accessed via the internet. More friends who possessed cameras and an interest in natural history were recruited, first for suggestions which went into a website which he designed for Fontenelle Forest and later for photos and descriptions of plants and animals occurring within the boundaries of Fontenelle Forest and Neale Woods. The site, fnanaturesearch.org, now contains over 2000 individual species accounts, each with one to several accompanying photos.

Retirement provided time for travel which included extended trips worldwide with his spouse, Ingrid, and numerous "grandparent" trips to visit his son and daughter and their families. There were birding trips to Texas, Arizona and the Nebraska Sandhills with three other retired friends who bore the self-designated title "good old boys". Another significant post-retirement pursuit was genealogy, and his legacy includes a meticulously researched and detailed family history he produced for his children.

Roland attended the New Jersey Institute of Technology graduating with a bachelor of science degree. Later he obtained a master of science degree from the University of Utah. At NJIT, he was a four year starter on the soccer team which, in 1959, reached the NAIA national tournament for the first time in school history. Following his senior season he was a second team All American selection and was invited to try out for the Pan-American games US national team. He was also a silver medalist on a fencing team which won the conference tournament title. In 2009 Roland was inducted into the NJIT Athletics Hall of Fame for his achievements in soccer and fencing.

Roland is survived by Ingrid, his wife of 53 years, son, daughter and grandchildren. Inurnment was at Arlington National Cemetery

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FALL FIELD REPORT, August-November 2015

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INTRODUCTION

To start, a house-keeping item: in the species accounts below, whenever I use the term "migrant" I am referring to fall migration only. Many species, of course, have differing migration strategies and timing in spring and fall.

Much of the data used in this report relating to western and Pine Ridge passerines comes from the outstanding banding efforts by Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (formerly Rocky Mountains Bird Observatory) at Chadron State Park (CSP) and Wildcat Hills Nature Center (WHNC) in Scotts Bluff Co. This year's operators were Josh Lefever and Holly Garrod. Related to the Chadron State Park station, Andrew Pierson made this interesting observation: "I was closely involved with the CSP banding station for all of the years prior to the fires (and the first year after when it was temporarily moved down to the pond area) and it was never a very successful operation. It was always way behind the Wildcat Hills site in terms of numbers and diversity. Now, it seems there are single days when they catch a former season's worth of birds. Is this directly attributable to the fires and subsequent regeneration of new habitat type and/or quality?"

This fall and the previous two falls have been noteworthy for the large number of final sighting dates for many species that are pushing against those species' latest expected dates. This phenomenon is across the board, both in waterbirds like Blue-winged Teal, Whooping Crane, Willet, and Common Tern, as well as passerines, such as Yellow-bellied (see species account for further discussion) Flycatcher, Plumbeous Vireo, Summer Tanager, at least 5 species of sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Lazuli and Indigo Buntings. Conversely, a few winter visitors showed up early, such as "Oregon" and "Pink-sided" Juncos.

Surprisingly large numbers of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Philadelphia Vireos appeared, as in previous fall seasons, but unexpected were influxes of Palm Warblers, usually rare in fall, and Black-throated Green Warblers.

Each season has its share of noteworthy happenings; this fall, check out the accounts for Osprey, which bred successfully for the first time in Nebraska, Black Rail, a mystery to hopefully be solved next June, a northeasterly nesting of Barn Owl, double-brooded American Kestrel, a tally of 266 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds passing through a Lincoln yard, and two very tardy Baltimore Orioles in Omaha.

Rarities this fall were few, but headed by 4th state records of both Black-headed Gull and Black-chinned Hummingbird, the latter, oddly, in far eastern Nebraska. Reports of Cave Swallow and the western subspecies of Nashville Warbler caused struggles with identification criteria, and the presence in the state of the western form of Orange-crowned Warbler was confirmed by the Pine Ridge banding stations mentioned earlier.

An update to my note in last year's Fall Seasonal Report: at that time I mentioned that 18% of the reports I used came from eBird-only contributors. A re-check for this report shows that figure now to be 52%, obviously a significant increase in only one year. I do believe that at some point eBird will largely supersede state and local on-line groups like NEBirds as the repository and source for Nebraska records as long as the trend of increasing use of eBird continues. However, I believe there still is a need for analysis and comment on the data available, which is probably best done through a Seasonal Report such as this.

Finally, some of you may be wondering what my guideline is for including any given species in these accounts, as some do appear some seasons but not in others. I include ALL species that are regular in occurrence for the season at hand; no Northern Shrikes in the Summer Report, for example. I include these regular species whether reported (eBird, NEBIRDS, or personally) or not, as the absence of a regular species is noteworthy. I also include any casual or accidental species that are reported. I believe it is not noteworthy if an unexpected species does not show, so not all casual/accidental species are included in any given season. Thus a casual species such as Gyrfalcon may be reported in one Winter Report but not the next.

ABBREVIATIONS

ad: adult
BOL: Branched Oak L, Lancaster Co
CBL: Capitol Beach L, Lincoln
Cem: Cemetery
Co(s): County(ies)
CLNWR: Crescent Lake NWR, Garden Co
CRP: Conservation Reserve Program
CSP: Chadron SP, Dawes Co
EAC: East Ash Creek Canyon, Dawes Co
fem: female
FF: Fontenelle Forest, Sarpy Co
HCR: Harlan Co Res SRA, Harlan Co
ICSP: Indian Cave State Park, Richardson/Nemaha Cos
imm: immature
juv: juvenile
L: Lake
LM: L McConaughy, Keith Co
LNB: Lakes North and Babcock, Platte Co
LO: L Ogallala (includes contiguous Keystone L), Keith Co
LSFM: Little Salt Fork Marsh, Lincoln
LSWNP: Lincoln Saline Wetlands Nature Park, Lincoln
m. ob.: many observers
NC: Nature Center
NGPC: Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Lincoln
NM: National Monument
NWR: National Wildlife Refuge

NOU: Nebraska Ornithologists' Union
PL: Pawnee L, Lancaster Co
Res: Reservoir
PRSP: Platte River SP, Cass Co
RC: Records Committee
RWB: Rainwater Basin, including parts of Phelps, Hamilton, York, Clay, Fillmore, and Thayer Cos
SCP: Spring Creek Prairie, Lancaster Co
SHP: State Historical Park
SL: Sewage Lagoon(s)
SP: State Park
SRA: State Recreation Area
VNWR: Valentine NWR, Cherry Co
WHNC: Wildcat Hills NC, Scotts Bluff Co
WMA: (State) Wildlife Management Area
WP: Wilderness Park, Lincoln
WPA: (Federal) Waterfowl Production Area

GAZETTEER

Jack Sinn: Jack Sinn Memorial WMA, Lancaster and Saunders Cos
Oliver Res: SRA, Kimball Co
Sandhills: large area of sand-based prairie in north-central and northwest Nebraska

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TJW: T.J. Walker, Brady
TJo: Tom Johnson, Cape May, NJ
TSh: Tyrone Shaw, Brady
WF: William Flack, Kearney

WM: Wayne Mollhoff, Ashland
WRa: Wallace Randall, Houston, TX
WRS: W. Ross Silcock, Tabor, IA

SPECIES ACCOUNTS

Greater White-fronted Goose: Reports were routine of this common migrant central, uncommon east, rare west.

Snow Goose: Reports were routine of this abundant migrant central and east, uncommon west.

Ross's Goose: A record fall count was the 400 amongst 100,000 Snow Geese in Fillmore Co 27 Nov (AB). One at Chappell L, Deuel Co, 10 Oct (BB) was a bit early, as was another near Holdrege 22 Oct (LE); migrants begin to appear mid-Oct.

Cackling Goose: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Canada Goose: Most summering urban flocks are not large; the 300 at a Douglas Co sod farm 29 Aug (EA) was unusual, possibly an aggregation of a few local flocks. Migrants may arrive in Sep however, and so this group may possibly have included early migrants, often detected by their smaller sizes, but no details were provided.

Mute Swan: A feral pair at Yanney L, Buffalo Co, had 4 cygnets 4 Aug (BB); they have been there for several years. At Crystal L, Blair, a family group of 5 present since Jan 2015 declined to 4 by 20 Sep (CPr), around the same time a single ad appeared on Prairie Queen Recreation Area, Sarpy Co, and remained there through 1 Nov (BP, CO).

Trumpeter Swan: The Ravenna nesting pair, present since 2011, had 3 cygnets 10 Aug (fide RH), but the pond had dried up by 7 Sep (RH). First arrivals at the Carter L, Omaha, wintering location were 18 birds in 3 groups 27 Nov (SMa). Two were at Bennington L, Douglas Co, 21 Nov (JR), and one was at BOL the next day (BS).

Tundra Swan: None were reported of this rare migrant; arrival is in late Nov.

Wood Duck: Reports were routine of this common migrant.

Gadwall: Best count was an excellent 982 in Lancaster Co 2 Nov (LE); high counts are 2030-5800.

American Wigeon: One in Saunders Co 28 Aug (LE) was early; early dates are 13-21 Aug. The count of 1500 at LO 17 Oct (EA) tied the previous second-highest count. High is 1670, at LM.

American Black Duck: None were reported of this rare eastern migrant.

Mallard: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Blue-winged Teal: There were 4 reported late migrants: one in Seward Co 22 Nov (CNK) was 8th-latest all-time. Expected late dates are 15-19 Nov; the other reports were of a fem at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 13 Nov (LE, details), one in Clay Co 10 Nov (WF), and 2 at CBL 8 Nov (MW).

Cinnamon Teal: Easterly was an apparent pair at BOL 11 Aug (LE); the male was in fading plumage, which makes this species much less noticeable in fall. The only other report was of 4 at Whitney L, Dawes Co, 25 Aug (ALa, JL).

Northern Shoveler: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Northern Pintail: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Green-winged Teal: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Canvasback: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Redhead: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Ring-necked Duck: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Greater Scaup: The only reports were of 2 at BOL 20 Nov (LE) and 2 at Olive Creek Res, Lancaster Co, 29 Nov (JGJ); these dates coincide with peak migration timing.

Lesser Scaup: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Surf Scoter: There were 4 reports of this rare annual fall migrant: one was at PL 29 Oct (JGJ), one at CBL 2 Nov (LE), 2 at PL 7 Nov (JGJ), and 3 at Bennington L, Douglas Co, 14 Nov (BP).

White-winged Scoter: There were two groups reported: 4 sub-adults in Saline Co 29 Oct (JGJ) and 3 sub-adults at L Wanahoo, Saunders Co, 7-14 Nov (JGJ, m. ob.).

Black Scoter: Two singles were reported, one at Alma SL 24-25 Oct (MB, G&WH) and one at CBL 30 Nov (LE).

Long-tailed Duck: None were reported of this rare annual fall migrant.

Bufflehead: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Common Goldeneye: Reports were routine of this common, locally abundant, statewide migrant.

Barrow's Goldeneye: The only report was of a fem with Common Goldeneyes at Olive Creek Res, Lancaster Co, 29 Nov (JGJ, video; MW, BHe). This is only the 4th eastern fall report, along with 2 in winter; there are no reports for central Nebraska away from LM, which raises a question as to whether these eastern birds are derived from the small eastern North American population rather than those in the Rockies, which presumably occur in western Nebraska.

Hooded Merganser: Two fem/imm birds were at PL 24 Sep (LE); such reports are rare but regular in summer and early fall and are most-likely non-breeding sub-adults.

Common Merganser: The 4 at LM 19 Aug (DRy) are expected there at this regular site for molt migrants, but a fem/imm was unexpected in Lincoln Co 25 Aug (TJW). There are several Aug-Sep reports, probably of non-breeding sub-adults, failed breeders, or molt migrants.

Red-breasted Merganser: The 40-50 at BOL 20 Nov (LE) was a good count; high counts are 44-137.

Ruddy Duck: The 1000 at LO 17 Oct (ERa) and 605 in Lancaster Co 30 Oct (LE) were excellent tallies; high counts are 1492-1645. This species breeds on occasion in the southeast, mostly in the Rainwater Basin and in Lancaster Co; broods were reported in York and Seward Cos 10-16 Aug (JGJ, LE). A single fem imm was at LSFM 16 Aug (BHe); Ruddy Ducks do not breed until their second summer.

Northern Bobwhite: Reports were all east of a line from Boone Co through Custer Co to Keith Co (m. ob.); best count was 20 in Buffalo Co 24 Nov (AF). Numbers are increasing in parts of Dodge Co, where 3 coveys of 12-15 birds were seen during harvest (D&JP). A rather late young bird incapable of flight was in Dodge Co 27 Oct (D&JP).

Gray Partridge: The only report was of 2 in Holt Co 20 Aug (BBo); currently this species' core range is bounded by Boyd, Holt, Antelope, Wayne, and Thurston Cos.

Ring-necked Pheasant: An excellent count was the 100+ estimated on a Cheyenne Co farm 25 Oct; most were in a Conservation Reserve Program field (BBi). Currently, highest numbers are in the southwest and southern Panhandle.

Sharp-tailed Grouse: Reports were within the expected range, including reports east to Rock and Brown Cos (RSt, ERa,WF); best count was 50 in Thomas Co 7 Sep (NBe). This is a high count for fall; some CBC tallies in the past have been higher.

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Best count was 150 in Lincoln Co 9 Nov (TJW); the only higher count was 179 in Boone Co on the Beaver Valley CBC in 2007.

Wild Turkey: Rather late broods of dependent young were in Seward Co 12 Sep (JG) and Lancaster Co 21 Sep (LE); both broods were about half-grown.

Red-throated Loon: There were no reports of this less-than-annual migrant.

Pacific Loon: None were reported of this rare regular fall migrant.

Common Loon: Summering birds, usually non-breeding sub-adults, are rare in the east; one at Cunningham L, Omaha, first reported 25 Jul (RMa), continued until at least 4 Aug (SMa). Another was at BOL 11-13 Aug (LE, TG).

Pied-billed Grebe: Best count was the 238 at CBL 18 Sep (LE). Large aggregations can occur in fall; high counts are 475-860.

Horned Grebe: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Red-necked Grebe: There were reports of perhaps 2 or 3 different birds. A basic-plumaged bird was at BOL 24-26 Nov (JGJ, LE, MW, BHe) and a first year bird was reported at Holmes L, Lincoln, 28-29 (LE, BP, EJ). These may have been the same bird, as described plumages are rather similar. The other report was of one rather early at LM 18 Oct (ERa); early dates are 17-19 Oct. This species is now a regular, but rare, fall migrant.

Eared Grebe: The 3rd RWB breeding report was noted in the Summer Report; it is mentioned here because of 11 nests found 7 Jul at Marsh Duck WMA, York Co, only one of which was found to be successful 9 Aug (JGJ). Last reported was rather late, a single at CBL 29 Nov (LE). Last dates are Dec 18 (twice) and 19.

Western Grebe: The high count reported at LM was 720 on 18 Oct (ERa), far lower than the usual fall buildup which reaches into the tens of thousands.

Clark's Grebe: The reports were from LM 4 Sep-18 Oct (MW, BHe, JR), and were comprised of a total of 6 birds, 5 of these 18 Oct (ERa).

Double-crested Cormorant: The nesting attempt at Harvard WPA, Clay Co, that was initiated 25 Jul had failed by Aug 26, when the 4 nests were found to have been abandoned (JGJ).

American White Pelican: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

American Bittern: One at LSWNP 24 Aug (BHe) was probably a migrant, as there were no summer reports there and migrants do first appear in late Aug. There were a further 10 reports in the period 7 Sep-5 Nov (m. ob.) for this often-tardy fall migrant.

Least Bittern: The only reports of this rare migrant were of singles at Jack Sinn 29 Aug (EA), and LSWNP 23 Aug (JSS).

Great Blue Heron: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Great Egret: This species (and other "white egrets") were slow to arrive in late summer (JGJ); only 10 were reported through 16 Aug (KD, SQ, JGJ), including 2 in Scotts Bluff Co 8 Aug KD, where rare. Perhaps they arrived late; 56 were in a tree at Walnut Creek L, Sarpy Co, 7 Oct (MBe). One at BOL 10 Nov (LE) was tardy; last dates are 19-21 Nov.

Snowy Egret: There were 4 reports, for a total of 6 birds, 3 Aug-7 Oct (JGJ, RSa, BP) all in the east.

Little Blue Heron: The only report was of one at DeSoto NWR, Washington Co, 13 Sep (HSw). This species has been rarely reported in recent years.

Cattle Egret: This species also was scarce in Aug, with only one such report, a single with ibises in Sheridan Co 5 Aug (TG). However, like Great Egret, impressive numbers showed up later: 90 were at Nathan's L, Washington Co, 7 Oct (SGu) and 24 were in Thomas Co 23 Sep (JGJ). These numbers pale, however, compared to the high fall counts: 450-591.

Green Heron: Reports were routine of this uncommon migrant in the southeastern two-thirds of the state.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: About the 8th-latest on record was one at BOL 23 Nov, described as "definitely a night-heron" (EJ). This species has lingered into Jan on two occasions.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: There were two reports of this rare summer visitor, both of juveniles at Harvard WPA, Clay Co, (JGJ): one on 16 Aug and 3 on 26 Aug.

Glossy Ibis: The only report after the several in summer was of an ad and a possible juv at Trumbull Basin, Clay Co, 16 Aug (JGJ). These birds may have been part of the group that successfully bred at nearby Harvard WPA, Clay Co.

White-faced Ibis: The first successful nesting of this species in the RWB was described in the Summer Report; the colony at Harvard WPA, Clay Co, had 50 juvs and that at Kirkpatrick North WMA, York Co, had 10 as of 10 Aug (JGJ).

Turkey Vulture: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Osprey: The successful breeding event by 2 pairs in and around Scottsbluff ended well; the first young bird (of 3) left the Western Sugar Factory nest 8 Aug, and by 11 Aug all were out of the nest (KD) but remained in the vicinity until at least 13 Aug (RSt). The Riverside nest west of Scottsbluff still had 3 young present, one out of the nest 10 Aug (KD). A 1904 paper by Bruner, Walcott and Swenk cites a successful nesting prior to 1904, without details. This is the first time since that pre-1904 record that Ospreys have bred successfully in Nebraska.

Mississippi Kite: There were the usual reports from this species' Nebraska stronghold, Ogallala, where up to 4 were reported (m. ob), and a welcome report from North Platte of 3 birds at Centennial Park 26-27 Aug (JC, SSc). Breeding has occurred at North Platte since 2012, with spotty success. After the breeding season, Mississippi Kites disperse in all directions, and so several have been reported over the years statewide around 1 Sep. This year, one was in Holt Co 30 Aug (ERo, DLu). Unexpected was one over Lincoln, Lancaster Co, 16 Aug (JG), likely an early fall disperser, as summering birds have not been reported from Lincoln.

Bald Eagle: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant and uncommon statewide breeder.

Northern Harrier: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide migrant.

Cooper's Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common, locally common, statewide migrant and breeder.

Northern Goshawk: None were reported of this rare fall visitor.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Of interest was one in Thurston Co 5 Aug (SSh); there are 2 previous breeding season reports from that county, but no proven breeding. A pair soaring over Omaha 2 Aug (GD, details) was likely based at FF.

Broad-winged Hawk: The only westerly report was of one near the CSP banding station 24 Sep (JL). Recent years have seen an increase in Panhandle sightings; of 18 reports, 12 are since 2000.

Swainson's Hawk: Easterly breeding season reports are rare and usually of single birds that are likely non-breeding sub-adults; singles were in Wayne Co 13 Aug (CNK) and Clay Co 16 Aug (JGJ). This species often forms huge migrating kettles in fall; one such, in Phelps Co 30 Sep, contained as many as 550 birds (AF). There are several reports over the years of fall kettles of over 1000 birds.

Red-tailed Hawk: A "Harlan's Hawk" in Washington Co 27 Sep (RMo) was early, although there is a Nebraska specimen 30 Sep. Single birds arrived at more typical dates in Saunders Co 17 Oct (CNK) and Lancaster Co 20 Oct (EB, NR). Urban pairs of Red-tailed Hawks are popular with downtown visitors; a pair feeding juveniles was in Omaha in Aug (JED). A "Krider's Hawk" was in Cherry Co 6 Nov (AFa); this was likely a migrant.

Rough-legged Hawk: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant and winter visitor.

Ferruginous Hawk: A few birds were easterly this fall; one was in Kearney Co 25 Oct (MB), possibly the same bird as one there 6 Nov (BB); one was taken to the Raptor Recovery Center from Utica, Seward Co, 6 Nov (JGJ); and a light morph juv was at Eppley Airfield, Omaha, 18 Nov (JT).

Golden Eagle: Easternmost was one in Hall Co 29 Oct (TJW); this species is rare in fall in the east.

Yellow Rail: Reports since 1980 (the first state fall record was in 1982) have all been in late Sep-early Oct, but not quite annual. This fall two were reported: one was flushed from mixed prairie and meadow grass at Peru Bottoms WMA, Nemaha Co, 27 Sep (WRS, details), and another found dead at an Omaha horticultural nursery 12 Oct had probably died 3-5 days earlier (JR, photo).

Black Rail: The status of this species on the Great Plains in summer is enigmatic, but there have been scattered records suggestive of sporadic breeding north and west as far as CLNWR and Morrill Co. On 27 Sep the "kick-ee-doo" call was heard clearly 3 times in meadow grass with some scattered small patches of water at Peru Bottoms WMA, Nemaha Co, (WRS). The call was heard in the same area 3 Oct (ARy, CRy), and on 11 Oct a series of 8 or so calls was clearly heard (WRS, ARy). The following was posted to the NEBirds list 11 Oct (WRS): "If territorial birds were there this summer, the likelihood of hearing the "kick-kick-kerr" in fall would seem to be higher than it would be if only migrants were passing through. This list has had the discussion of 'why do birds sing in fall?' before; it seems that a fall hormonal pulse is probably the reason, but this would seem more likely to apply to summer territorial birds preparing for departure rather than migrants in passage. The calls on 27 Sep and 11 Oct were from the same place in the field, suggesting this was indeed a summer territory; perhaps the birds are still protecting fledged young. Tapes failed to elicit a response on either day. Fall departure of interior summering birds is thought to be during October; there are KS dates 17 and 29 Oct, an IA date 8 Oct, and the only NE fall dates in late Sep."

Virginia Rail: This species winters in small numbers at cattail seeps, mostly along the North Platte and Niobrara Rivers, but one in Adams Co 8 Nov was thought to be a late migrant (LR, RH), although dates of non-wintering birds after mid-Oct are few.

Sora: One at Spikerush WMA, York Co, 1 Aug (TG) may have been an early migrant; departure from breeding grounds may begin as early as late Jul. There is only one recent confirmed breeding record for the RWB since the 1980s.

American Coot: Best counts were the 2306 in Lancaster Co 8 Oct (LE) and 2250 at LO 17 Oct (ERa). High counts are 6315-17,359 (!).

Sandhill Crane: The pair established at Kiowa WMA, Scotts Bluff Co, since 2009 had 2 young on 10 Oct (KD), and an ad was reported from the RWB 16 Aug (JGJ); breeding has occurred on several occasions in the RWB. Migrants appeared on time; the best count reported was 1500 at a playa wetland in Lincoln Co 28 Oct (TJW), but the estimated 500 over Dodge Co 19 Nov was unexpected that far east (D&JP) where it is the second-highest count on record for the east.

Whooping Crane: An exciting event for birders was the cooperative group of 6, including one juv, that stayed at Father Hupp WMA, Thayer Co, 14-29 Nov (fide JGJ; m. ob.); the last date, 29 Nov, is third-latest on record for this species. A group of 5, including one juv, was at BOL, an unexpected location, 13 Nov (JGJ, video).

Black-necked Stilt: The only reports were of 6 near Antioch, including 2 juvs, 15 Aug (RSt), 10 at CLNWR 15 Aug (KBo), and 4 in Sheridan Co 18 Aug (DRy). This species is scarce after mid-Aug.

American Avocet: The 1-9 at BOL 25 Oct-7 Nov (ERa, TG, JGJ) were rather late; last dates are 7-10 Nov.

Black-bellied Plover: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide migrant.

American Golden-Plover: There were only 3 reports; this species occurs in lower numbers in fall, mostly juvs, as most ads migrate eastward to the Atlantic Coast. One was in Douglas Co 18 Sep (KGo), 3 were in Fillmore Co 16 Oct (JGJ), and 106 were there 25 Oct (JGJ). The latter is a good fall tally; high fall counts are 116-420.

Semipalmated Plover: One in Saunders Co 17 Oct (CNK) was tardy; late dates are 20-25 Oct.

Piping Plover: This species is rarely-reported in fall; the 2 reports were of singles at LNB 19 Aug (CDy) and at LO 24 Aug (JGJ).

Killdeer: Reports were routine of this common statewide summer resident and migrant.

Mountain Plover: None were reported; this species departs rather early, although in recent years flocks have been found into early Sep.

Spotted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Solitary Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Greater Yellowlegs: One at Father Hupp WMA, Thayer Co, 23 Nov (JGJ) was a bit tardy; late dates are 17-18 Nov, but there are a few Dec and even Jan dates.

Willet: One at Conestoga L, Lancaster Co, 24 Oct (TEL) was second-latest on record. Last expected dates are 27-29 Sep. This species is rare in the east in fall, especially in Sep; reports were 21 Aug at BOL (LE), 2 on 20 Aug in Butler Co (CDy), and 2 at LNB 8 Sep (JGJ). The latter is only about the 22nd record statewide after Aug.

Lesser Yellowlegs: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Upland Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Long-billed Curlew: None were reported of this fairly common migrant west and central.

Marbled Godwit: This species is much less common in fall than in spring, as many migrate eastward to the Atlantic Coast. There were 4 reports from the west 14 Aug-7 Sep (RSt, DRy, MW, BHe, JR) including 12 at Sherman Res, Sherman Co, 6 Sep (JGJ). Easterly reports are less than annual, with only about 12 records east of the RWB; one was in Jefferson Co 11 Sep (CNK).

Ruddy Turnstone: Prior to this fall there were only 33 fall records in all, but this year there were 3 reports totaling 4 birds: one at Harvard WPA, Clay Co, 3 Aug (JGJ), one at BOL 18 Aug (LE), and 1-2 at LNB 5-8 Sep (TJW, JGJ), at least one a juv (JGJ).

Stilt Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Sanderling: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Dunlin: This species is a late migrant in fall, molting before departure; the only 2 reports were probably of the same bird, a basic-plumaged bird at Jack Sinn 24 and 26 Oct (EA photo, EJ).

Baird's Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Least Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern and central migrant, rare west.

Pectoral Sandpiper: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Last dates can be uncertain due to confusion with Western Sandpiper; observers of Semipalmated Sandpipers seen after early Oct should provide details of the sighting. One was seen in Saunders Co 17 Oct by several observers (CNK, SQ, BW).

Western Sandpiper: One at LSFM 20 Oct (EB) was tardy; last dates are 20-29 Oct.

Short-billed Dowitcher: The only reports were of 2 juvs at Harvard WPA, Clay Co, 16 Aug (JGJ), a single at LSWNP 23 Aug (JSS), and a juv at LNB 8 Sep (JGJ); these dates are within the fall migration period, which ends earlier than that for Long-billed Dowitcher.

Long-billed Dowitcher: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Wilson's Snipe: Migrants may appear beginning in late Jul, and so Aug reports may be of migrants or possibly local breeders. Reports of 1-2 from Jack Sinn, where breeding probably occurs most years, were 3-25 Aug (TG, LE). One in Madison Co 9 Aug (WF) may have been a breeder; breeding has occurred in several northeast Nebraska counties. One at VNWR 17 Nov was the observer's "first there in Nov" (WM), and others were tardy in Fillmore Co 24 Nov (WF) and Thayer Co 29 Nov (JGJ). Last dates for migrants are difficult to discern as snipe may attempt to overwinter almost anywhere in the state.

American Woodcock: The only report was of one a bit tardy in the Krimlofski Tract, southeast Washington Co 9 Nov (D&JP); last dates are 18-20 Nov.

Wilson's Phalarope: The 142 at Trumbull Basin 16 Aug was an excellent fall count for the RWB (JGJ).

Red-necked Phalarope: Uncommon in the east, there were reports from 5 locations 21 Aug-20 Sep of a total of 16, most if not all, juvs (MW, JGJ, m. ob.). A juv at HCR 24 Oct (TJW) was second-latest on record.

Sabine's Gull: The only report was of one at CBL 26 Sep (ERa); usually several are reported each fall Sep-Oct.

Bonaparte's Gull: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Black-headed Gull: A cooperative basic ad was at BOL 11-22 Nov (NA photo, m. ob.). This is the 3rd documented record for NE; a 4th was probably correct as well. The records are in the period 12 Aug-21 Dec.

Laughing Gull: A juv remained at BOL 18-25 Aug (LE, MW, RSt); this is the 23rd record for Nebraska for this mostly summer visitor.

Franklin's Gull: The 26,550 in Lancaster Co 8 Oct (LE) was impressive, but high counts are rather incredible: 85,000-300,000.

Ring-billed Gull: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

California Gull: Up to 6 were at LM, the regular haunt for this species, 4 Sep-18 Oct (MW, ERa, BHe, JR); of 6 present 18 Oct, 5 were ads and one a juv (ERa). An ad was easterly at HCR 24 Oct (MB, TJW, m. ob.).

Herring Gull: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Thayer's Gull: Only one arrived in time for this Fall Report: a first winter bird at Bennington L, Douglas Co, 21 Nov (JR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: The only reports were of 1-3 at LO 17 Oct, including at last one ad and one 3rd-year (ERa). This species is now regular as a migrant in Nebraska.

Least Tern: Good counts were the 23 in western Douglas Co 14 Aug (JR) and 13 nearby at a Valley housing development (JR); such tallies in Aug usually are a mix of post-breeding ads and juvs. High counts are 16-25, all in the short period 9-18 Aug.

Caspian Tern: A group of 9 was at BOL 24 Sep (LE), only one remaining by 8 Oct (LE), a rather late date. Expected last dates are 9-10 Oct. In all, about 15 were reported 25 Aug-8 Oct (m. ob.).

Black Tern: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Common Tern: One at HCR 24 Oct (TJW, MB) is 4th-latest on record; later dates are 25 Oct-2 Nov. Five additional reports were of up to 5 birds in the period 22-27 Sep (JGJ, TJW, MW, BP).

Forster's Tern: One at HCR 24 Oct (TJW) was rather late; last dates are 28 Oct-1 Nov. The 69 at BOL 2 Sep (LE) was a good count; highs are 109-400.

Rock Pigeon: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

White-winged Dove: One of the pair that nested on the UNK Campus in Kearney was reported 15 Aug (RSt) and 9 Sep (RH), but no outcome of the nesting was noted. Two appeared in a Kearney yard some 19 blocks from the UNK Campus 23 Aug, increasing to 5, including at least one juv, on 17 Oct, with one still present 7 Nov (BB). These birds may have been, or included, the nesting birds on the UNK Campus earlier. Two continued in an Ogallala yard, seen 29 Sep (JO), and one in a Gering yard 10-23 Nov was the "first there for a while" (RSg).

Mourning Dove: The 700 in Dawes Co 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) was an excellent count; highs are mainly estimates: 4000+ in Cherry Co 1 Sep 2007, "several hundred" in south-central counties 21 Sep 2002, and "hundreds" in Franklin Co 26 Aug 2012. A pair fledged 2 chicks prior to 14 Aug on a window sill at LM, then proceeded with a second clutch of 2 on 14 Aug (J&GB). Mourning Doves are known to have produced 5 broods in a season, though this might be impossible in Nebraska!

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Oddly, all reports were from the east, although the species tends to be less common westward. One in Cuming Co 5 Oct (LE) was tardy, although last dates are towards the end of Oct.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Four were reported, about the norm in the last few years. Singles were in Omaha 1 Aug (JR), at BOL 18 Aug (LE), at FF 8 Sep (RS), and in Thurston Co 26 Sep (MB, SQ).

Barn Owl: A nest in Dixon Co had 3 nestlings and 4 fledged young nearby 13 Aug (JJ, CNK). Nesting was unknown in the extreme northeast until recently; most are found in dryer parts of the state, especially the south and west. One was seen most evenings 23 Aug-1 Oct flying around WHNC (ALa, JL, HG).

Eastern Screech-Owl: A Wood Duck box in the observer's Dixon Co yard hosts a roosting bird most winters; it usually arrives in Dec, but this year was in the box 4 Oct (JJ).

Great Horned Owl: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Snowy Owl: Leading off this winter's visitors was a "heavily-marked juv" near Stromsburg 30 Nov (KSL photo, fide MB).

Burrowing Owl: Best counts were 10 at CLNWR 15 Aug (KBo) and 9 in Scotts Bluff Co 8 Aug (KD).

Barred Owl: One northeast of Nelson in Nuckolls Co 16 Oct (JGJ) continues the consolidation and expansion of the range westward in southern Nebraska. This sighting is on a tributary of the Little Blue River, and would be an extension of the range in Jefferson Co, but Barred Owls have also been found at the east end of the Republican River Valley, which is also in Nuckolls Co.

Long-eared Owl: The only reports were of one 5 and 8 Nov at VNWR (AFa). Wintering birds arrive in late Oct.

Short-eared Owl: The only report was of one in Gage Co 1 Nov (SSc); as with Long-eared Owl, numbers of Short-ears increase somewhat by late Oct.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: The birds in the Wildcat Hills continue; "barks and screeching" were heard near WHNC 19 Sep, a two-year-old fem that was banded last year was netted 20 Sep, and the same fem was netted again 27 Sep (HG, JL).

Common Nighthawk: One in Scotts Bluff Co 10 Oct (AK) was rather late; last dates are 20-24 Oct.

Common Poorwill: One-two at CSP 4-6 Oct (JL) were rather late, as was one at WHNC 7 Oct (HG); previous last dates were 3-5 Oct. None were reported east of Lincoln Co.

Chuck-will's-widow: None were reported; most depart or remain silent after Jun, as there are only 7 records for Jul and later.

Eastern Whip-poor-will: The only one detected late enough for this report was in Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 1 Aug (RS). This species, like Chuck-will's-widow, is hard to find after it falls silent in late summer.

Chimney Swift: Reports were routine of this common eastern migrant, uncommon west.

White-throated Swift: Reports were routine of this fairly common western migrant.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Recent years have seen more westerly reports, especially in fall; an ad fem was in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 2 Sep, where the observer noted "we have a couple every year" (KD). At more expected locations these days at the west edge of the fall migration corridor were singles in Adams Co 5 and 13 Sep, where Ruby-throated Hummingbird is a "regular migrant Aug-Sep" (FMa), and at Rowe Sanctuary, where a male was present for a few days through 28 Aug (BB). Data on exactly how many hummers pass through a given yard in a season is hard to come by, but exhaustive recording and nightly analysis by 4 video and one still camera operating continuously in a Lincoln yard have produced fascinating information (R&SW). For the years 2007-2014 inclusive, the fall tally varied from 13 to 112, the latter in 2011, but in 2015 an amazing 266 individuals were counted; peak day was 11 Sep, when 36 were recorded (R&SW).

Black-chinned Hummingbird: This species will continue to add new records as it expands its summer range northward on the western Great Plains. An *Archilochus* hummingbird videotaped in Omaha 21-23 Aug (JR) was probably this species; the video was viewed by Steve Mlodinow, who looked at museum specimens and confirmed the identification (fide JR), as well as "renowned hummingbird expert" Sheri L. Williamson. Both agreed that the bird was at least a "probable" Black-chinned Hummingbird. Williamson noted: "I see two different birds in that video: a probable female Black-chinned, and a more ambiguous juvenile male *Archilochus* in the still at the end. Apparent lack of a tail notch is a further point of evidence in favor of Black-chinned for the first bird; she doesn't pump her tail when hovering between feeding bouts, but that's not an infallible Black-chinned characteristic." In my opinion, it may well be a hybrid RTHU x BCHU. The report will be examined by the NOURC.

Interestingly, Mlodinow noted that the primaries of the Omaha bird appeared to be a bit narrower than might be expected for Black-chinned, but within the range of variation for the species. As Black-chinneds spread northward, they are hybridizing with Ruby-throateds; a banding study in Oklahoma (Judd et al. 2011), where ranges of the two species overlap, resulted in the following conclusion: "During the course of this study, 30 adult male Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, 77 adult male Black-chinned Hummingbirds, and 11 male hybrids were banded. A total of 118 adult male hummingbirds were banded, with 9.3% of them being apparent hybrids. Banding 11 apparent male hybrids from 2006 to 2009 suggests that hybridization between the two *Archilochus* species in Oklahoma is widespread." An indication of the current status of Black-chinned Hummingbird in western KS comes from a veteran observer, Tom Shane: "... we finally had a nice wave of *Archilochus* hummingbirds arriving on 8 Sept 2015. ... I am guessing we had a ratio of 70 BCHUs to 30 RTHUs. We still had 2 Black-chins and one probable Ruby-throat today 3 Oct 2015. Black-chins nested this year 30 miles west of the Kansas ~ Colorado line in Lamar, CO. We have not had an adult male BCHU here in Garden City in a number of years."

Broad-tailed Hummingbird: Only two were reported: a fem was in a Scotts Bluff Co yard 9-11 Aug (KD), and a fem/imm was at a McConaughy feeder 28 Sep-4 Oct (J&GB, photo).

Rufous Hummingbird: All reports were from the aforementioned DeLara yard in Scotts Bluff Co, rounding out a rather poor showing of *Selasphorus* hummers for the season: an imm male 1 Aug, 2 imm males 18 Aug, and a single 29 Aug (KD).

Calliope Hummmingbird: Only one was reported, that 16-17 Aug in a Scotts Bluff Co yard (KD) where the species is regular in low numbers in fall.

Belted Kingfisher: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide breeder and migrant.

Lewis's Woodpecker: Though a regular migrant in the Panhandle, numbers are low. The only reports were of one in Smiley Canyon, Sioux Co, 12 Aug (KS), and another in EAC 5-6 Sep (MW, JR, BHe; photo).

Red-headed Woodpecker: An imm in Greeley Co 18 Oct (LR, RH) was tardy; last dates in the north are 30 Sep and 2 Oct (twice). One was in Otoe Co 10 Nov (SQ); this species is uncommon in the southeast in winter.

Red-bellied Woodpecker: One in Hooker Co 5 Sep (JGJ) was perhaps the first for that Sandhills Co, and 1-2 were between Scottsbluff and Minatare 25-28 Nov (PRa, WRa). This species still occurs only in low numbers in the western North Platte River Valley. Unusual was one in Fillmore Co 11 Aug with a yellow rather than red head stripe (JRi) as sometimes seen in Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Reports were numerous, continuing a recent trend, with at least 40 individuals reported, notably 11 in a sweep through Boone, Platte, and Nance Cos 3 Oct (MB, DH) and 7 in about 5 hours' birding in Fillmore, Thayer, and Jefferson Co, also on 3 Oct (JGJ). Almost all the reports were from the east, but singles were in Custer 16 Oct (LE) and 28 Nov (imm, WF) and Keith 17 Oct (ERa). One in Lincoln 31 Aug (JSS) was a very early migrant, early dates are 18-20 Sep. One reported as a Yellow-bellied at Ft. Robinson, Dawes Co, 22 Sep had a "distinctive red cap" (CGe); this description may apply to either sapsucker species, but the date and location suggest Red-naped.

Red-naped Sapsucker: The only report was of one in southern Scotts Bluff Co 6 Oct (AK); there are only about 30 fall records of this rare but annual migrant.

Downy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Hairy Woodpecker: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

American Three-toed Woodpecker: There were no reports of this species, most recently seen in East Ash Canyon, Dawes Co, in July 2015.

Northern Flicker: An amazing count of 270 was made of birds that flew continuously over Omaha for about 5 hours 7 Oct (JR), needless to say, a record fall count. High counts previously were 48-73, all in the period 3-12 Nov. Another good tally was the 50 in Garfield Co 7 Sep (LR, RH).

Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker: Rather early in the east were one in Dixon Co 19-28 Sep (JJ) and another at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 23 Sep (DLi); previous early dates for the east were 21-24 Sep.

Pileated Woodpecker: All reports were from Washington, Douglas, and Sarpy Cos (m. ob.); this species is an uncommon resident in the lower Missouri River Valley.

American Kestrel: A pair in Omaha apparently were into a second nesting cycle 2 Aug; 2-3 young were present 18 Aug (GD). This species is one of few raptors that does double-brood (fide JGJ); a nest box in Lincoln had the last of a first brood of young birds about to fledge when a second set of 2 eggs was laid 26 May; these fledged successfully as well (JGJ). This nest box has produced 3 double broods in the last 5 years, which is a high rate; kestrels in Florida double-brood about 11 % of the time (JGJ).

Merlin: A "fairly dark" bird at BOL 19 Sep (MW) was likely the long-distance migrant subspecies *Falco columbarius columbarius,* for which early dates are 12-19 Sep. Early dates for the lighter-colored wintering subspecies *F. c. richardsonii,* are 11-14 Aug. Some *F. c. columbarius* winter.

Peregrine Falcon: Most reports are from Omaha and Lincoln, presumably the resident birds there. True migrants away from those cities generally move through with shorebirds; the 5 such reports were in the period 15 Aug-27 Sep (m. ob.), as expected.

Prairie Falcon: The fall data suggest a gradual eastward movement, culminating in the latest dates belonging generally to birds in or close to the east: singles in Saline Co 29 Oct (JGJ), Jefferson Co 18 Nov (LE), Franklin Co 25 Oct (MB), and Thayer 29 Nov (TJo, MRo). Another was easterly in Clay Co 18 Oct (EBa). Early dates in the east are 22-28 Sep.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Westernmost was one in Hall Co 17 Sep (SM), where the species is uncommon.

Western Wood-Pewee: Reports were routine of this common western migrant, rare casual central.

Eastern Wood-Pewee: A juv was being fed by ads in Lincoln 12 Sep (SSc), a rather late date.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: There were 3 reports of this rare migrant. Singles were at WP 29 Aug (LE) and near Potter St in Lincoln 7-11 Sep (ERa). The third report was on a very late date, 22 Oct in Omaha (JR); photos were sent to an expert who confirmed the identification, although it now seems more likely that the bird was actually a "Western" Flycatcher, likely a Pacific Slope Flycatcher (submitted to NOURC). The latter species has occurred about 3 times each in Louisiana and Pennsylvania.

Acadian Flycatcher: Three were at ICSP 16 Aug (JC photo, SSc) where the species breeds, and one at WP 9 Sep (LE) may also have been a breeder, as this species has been there most summers, albeit only 1-2, since 2009. One at Wyuka Cem, Lincoln, 8 Sep (LE) was probably a migrant.

Alder Flycatcher: The only report was of one in Dixon Co 3 Sep (JJ). This species is less than annual in fall.

Willow Flycatcher: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide breeder and migrant.

Least Flycatcher: One calling at FF 1 Oct (EB) was rather late; last dates are 1-3 Oct. Strangely, all of the reports were from the east.

Hammond's Flycatcher: Only 2 were reported, singles in Sioux Co 6 Sep (MW) and Kimball Co 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe). This is a regular fall migrant in the Panhandle 25 Aug-23 Sep.

Dusky Flycatcher: The banding operations at CSP and WHNC are yielding important documentation of western migrants. Two were netted and measured at WHNC, one each 2 Sep (HG) and 4 Sep (JL). Like Hammond's Flycatcher, this species is a regular fall migrant in the Panhandle 24 Aug-24 Sep.

Cordilleran Flycatcher: Reports were from known breeding locations, although singles at CSP 28 Aug and 7 Sep (JL) may have been migrants. There are only a few reports from CSP during the breeding season, none with breeding evidence. Four other individuals were found 5-7 Sep in EAC and Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, (MW, BHe, JR).

Eastern Phoebe: One at PL 2 Nov (LE) was rather late; last dates are Nov 3-4.

Say's Phoebe: Two in Knox Co 17 Sep (RD) were easterly; there are few such records in fall.

Great Crested Flycatcher: This species is less than annual in fall in the Panhandle, where any *Myiarchus* flycatcher is worth a second look. Two were reported, only the 9th and 10th Panhandle fall records: one at Oliver Res 13 Aug, reported cautiously as "Presumed; much red in spread tail" (BFH), and one banded at CSP 15 Sep (JL).

Cassin's Kingbird: This species forms notable aggregations in fall, but a record high count was the 114 in southeastern Banner Co 24 Aug (JGJ); previous high counts were 43-52. The same observer located 44 south of Redington in the Wildcat Hills the same day (JGJ).

Western Kingbird: An impressive count for the east was the 44 at Eppley Airfield, Omaha, 4 Aug (SMa).

Eastern Kingbird: The 119 at BOL 28 Aug (LE) was a good tally; high counts, however, range from 150 to 500+.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Following the successful breeding near Valley (see Summer Seasonal Report), an imm there 28 Aug appeared brightly-colored with a greenish tinge to the mantle and a yellow wash on its underparts, raising questions as to it being a hybrid between Scissor-tailed and one of the yellow-breasted kingbirds (JR); it was concluded that it was most likely to have been a brightly-colored imm Scissor-tailed.

Loggerhead Shrike: One in Scotts Bluff Co 10 Oct (KD) was only the 10th Oct and Nov record for the Panhandle; most depart the west in Sep.

Northern Shrike: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide winter visitor.

Bell's Vireo: One at Seneca, Thomas Co, 23 Sep (JGJ) and another in Holt Co 12 Sep (WF) were quite late for the north, where last dates are 5-7 Sep.

Yellow-throated Vireo: Reports were routine of this fairly common eastern migrant.

Plumbeous Vireo: Previous last dates for this uncommon Panhandle breeder and migrant were 17-21 Sep, but the Panhandle banding efforts yielded 3 later dates: 2 on 22 Sep and one on 23 Sep at CSP (JL), and one was seen at WHNC 30 Sep (HG). Plumbeous Vireos were numerous in EAC 5 Sep, when 6 were present and vocalizing (MW, BHe, JR).

Cassin's Vireo: The 3 Panhandle reports involving 4 birds in all 24 Aug-13 Sep (HG, MW, JR, BHe, JRo) were as expected for this regular western fall migrant.

Blue-headed Vireo: The numerous reports spanned the expected migration date range, 28 Aug-14 Oct (m. ob.); all were from Hall and Thayer Cos eastward.

Warbling Vireo: Last expected dates are on 5 Oct, and so tardy were singles in Omaha 8 Oct (JR) and in Merrick Co 10 Oct (LR, RH). There are a few scattered later dates including one banded 17 Nov. One a bit late at Ft. Robinson SRA, Dawes Co, 15 Sep was identified as the expected western subspecies (CRu), which appears to depart earlier than those elsewhere in the state; previous last dates for the west were 14-16 Sep.

Philadelphia Vireo: The number of reports received continues to increase; the 25 or so were for the period 19 Aug-13 Oct, the latter the 5th report for Oct after 5 Oct. Observers should be aware that fall eastern Warbling Vireos can look very similar to Philadelphia Vireos. See for example http://www.powdermillarc.org/highlights/2009/earlyfall.aspx (scroll down).

Red-eyed Vireo: Two were rather late 12 Oct at ICSP (KKi); previous last dates were 7-11 Oct.

Pinyon Jay: None were reported of this fairly common but erratic Panhandle visitor.

Blue Jay: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident and migrant.

Black-billed Magpie: Discouragingly, only one report was significantly east of the Panhandle, that of one in Buffalo Co 7 Nov (BB). Two reports were from Lincoln Co: 3 along Lydic Road, 14 Aug (TJW) and one north of North Platte 9 Nov (AFa). Also 1-2 were in the LM area 17-18 Oct (ERa). Panhandle reports were widespread, from Dawes, Scotts Bluff, Morrill, and Cheyenne Cos. Intriguing was a report of 32 "migrating" at Ft. Robinson SRA, Dawes Co, 2 Oct (CGe), the most reported together in several years. Magpies are not migratory in the true sense, but may disperse at times if necessary. One wonders what triggered this movement and where the birds came from.

American Crow: This species often moves south in large aggregations in Nov; best count was 250 on 9 Nov in Lincoln Co (AFa), which pales beside the high counts on record of 500-2000.

Horned Lark: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Purple Martin: The Midtown Omaha Roost had 10,000 birds on 1 Aug (JDa) and 12 Aug and peaked at 45,000-50,000 on 25 Aug (JR), a bit lower than the prior few years.

Tree Swallow: The 800 at BOL 19 Sep (MW) was second-highest fall count on record (highest is 1000).

Violet-green Swallow: None were reported of this uncommon western breeder and rare migrant.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Bank Swallow: The count of 1000 in northern Dixon Co 11 Aug (JJ) is impressive, and is 3rd-highest fall tally on record; high count for the state is 10,000!

Cliff Swallow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Cave Swallow: Ad Cave Swallows are fairly straightforward to identify vs ad Cliff Swallows; however, the range of variation among the thousands of juv Cliff Swallows that occur in Nebraska in fall makes separation of juv Cave Swallow at that time of year extremely difficult. A single bird 25 Aug of uncertain age with a capped appearance and pale buffy throat was identified as this species; the report is referred to NOURC. An update on another, "possible" juv Cave Swallow, May 2015 (SMa) suggested that it was best left unidentified (Leukering, BIRDWG01); Mary Brown believed it was probably an early-hatched southern juv Cliff that moved north with Nebraska Cliff Swallows, a similar provenance suggested for the spring juv Cave Swallow records for Nebraska.

Barn Swallow: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Black-capped Chickadee: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Tufted Titmouse: A handful of reports were from Lancaster Co, where the species has a tenuous hold (LE, MUs, ERa); few are reported west of there. One in Gage Co 3 Aug (SQ) was one of only a few reports in that county.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Two birds were defending a possible territory against kingbirds in pines near Zorinsky L, Omaha, 2 Aug 2015 (JDa). Although fall migrants appear early in Aug on occasion, breeding in the southeast is not unprecedented, with confirmed instances in Seward and Lancaster Cos.

White-breasted Nuthatch: Reports were routine of this common resident east, locally common central in river valleys, fairly common Pine Ridge.

Pygmy Nuthatch: This common Panhandle resident appears to be doing well; multiple numbers were banded most days at WHNC (HG) and CSP (JL); best count was a record 20 on 5 Sep in EAC (MW, JR, BHe). Previous high counts were 11-14.

Brown Creeper: The 10 at Cottonmill Park, Kearney, 20 Nov (BB) was a good count; previous highs were 7-12. One at Mercer Woods, Omaha, 26 Sep (JR) was rather early; early dates away from breeding locations are 20-22 Sep.

Rock Wren: One in Thomas Co 5 Sep (JGJ) may have been a breeder there; this location is probably at the east edge of the regular breeding range.

House Wren: "Perhaps a third brood" was in a Fillmore Co yard 11 Aug (JRi); there is a record for Nebraska of House Wrens raising 4 broods in a summer.

Winter Wren: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern migrant.

Sedge Wren: Previous last dates were 28-30 Oct, and so these 3 reports were of tardy birds: 29 Oct and 7 Nov at Prairie Queen L, Sarpy Co, (EB, CO), and 1 Nov at LSFM, where they had been present "all fall" (BHe). This species is well-known for its appearance in mid-Jul and initiating breeding behavior; a juv was with 4 singing ads in Lancaster Co 5 Aug (SSc). Rare westward, a surprise was one in Kimball Co 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe); all other reports were from Hall Co (EBa) eastward. The 35 at LSFM 4 Oct (MW) was a good count; previous high counts were 31-123.

Marsh Wren: One singing an eastern song was in Wheeler Co 11 Sep (WF); this is on the west edge of the usual range for this song type, and may have been a migrant.

Carolina Wren: All reports were within the southeast Nebraska area bounded by Dodge, Seward, and Lancaster Cos, more or less the range occupied in the last few years.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: The highest number ever banded in a season at WHNC was the 21 during this fall (HG), reflective of the increasing numbers of this species in the west as well as over most of the state. One in Dundy Co 11 Oct (PBu, SRi) was latest on record by 8 days.

Golden-crowned Kinglet: Reports were routine of this fairly common statewide migrant.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Eastern Bluebird: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central migrant, uncommon west.

Mountain Bluebird: Reports were routine of this common western and central migrant and fairly common breeder west.

Townsend's Solitaire: Reports were routine of this common western migrant, uncommon central.

Veery: None were reported of this rare western and eastern migrant.

Gray-cheeked Thrush: There were no reports of this less-than-annual fall migrant.

Swainson's Thrush: One in Omaha 12 Aug (JR) was rather early; expected early dates are 24-25 Aug. There are two previous early reports, both, oddly, on 12 Aug also.

Hermit Thrush: Migrants in the west arrive some 2 weeks earlier than those in the east, and different subspecies are involved; of 7 dates for Sep this fall, all but one were banded at WHNC and CSP beginning 15 Sep (HG, JL), while first in the east was in Omaha 29 Sep (JR). Last in the west was at CSP 9 Oct (JL), and in the east, 31 Oct in Omaha (JR).

Wood Thrush: Rather late were 2 in Hormel Park, Dodge Co, 2 Oct (WF); last dates are 6-10 Oct.

American Robin: Although the 930 at BOL 29 Nov (LE) is a good count, fall highs are rather amazing, in the range "thousands for a few days" through 150,000.

Gray Catbird: Westerly and tardy were several individuals; one was in Ogallala 18 Oct (ERa), one in Dundy Co 11 Oct (TDe, m. ob.), and one of two at CSP 7-9 Oct was banded (JL). Previous last dates in the west are 29 Sep-1 Oct, with only 2 dates later than 18 Oct. The 20 in Lancaster Co 21 Sep (LE) was a good count; highs are 24-30.

Brown Thrasher: The 11 in Omaha 29 Sep (JR) was a good count, as was the 9 at BOL 28 Aug (LE); previous highs were 9-18.

Sage Thrasher: There were 6 reports of this uncommon western Panhandle migrant, including 9 in Kimball Co 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe). High counts are 10-13. Remaining reports were of 1-4 at 4 locations in Sioux, Dawes, Scotts Bluff, and Kimball Cos 13 Aug-6 Sep (RSt, BFH, HKH, KSz).

Northern Mockingbird: Reports were routine of this fairly common southern breeder and uncommon migrant.

European Starling: Reports were routine of this abundant fall migrant.

American Pipit: Rather late was one at Bennington L, Douglas Co, 21 Nov (JR, BP); last dates are 23-25 Nov. There are a few Dec reports but none for Jan-Feb.

Sprague's Pipit: There were 4 reports 13 Sep-23 Oct: one at Jack Sinn 13 Sep (KGo), one in Cuming Co 28 Sep (LE), one at SCP 3 Oct (JSS), and 2 at PL 23 Oct (LE). The Jack Sinn bird was a bit early; previous early dates were 14-15 Sep.

Bohemian Waxwing: None were reported of this erratic northwestern winter visitor.

Cedar Waxwing: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Lapland Longspur: The 900 in Fillmore Co 27 Nov (AB) was a good count; highs are 1000+ to 9000.

Chestnut-collared Longspur: The two reports were of 3 along Murphy Road, Sioux Co, 3 Sep (HKH), where the species breeds, and 2 near Ft. Robinson SP, Dawes Co, 16 Sep (CRu). Departure from breeding grounds begins in early Sep.

Smith's Longspur: There are fewer than 30 reports in all for fall; this year there were two. Two calling birds flew over SCP 14 Oct (DGe), and 12 were with Lapland Longspurs at Father Hupp WMA, Thayer Co, 27 Nov (TJo photo, MRo). The latter sighting is one of the latest; there are 4 records for Dec and one in Feb, although wintering has not been documented.

McCown's Longspur: The only report was of 10 along Murphy Rd, Sioux Co, 3 Sep (HKH); breeding occurs in this area.

Snow Bunting: Arrival is usually in mid-Nov, and so few if any Snow Buntings make the fall report most years. This year, however, 12 were at VNWR rather early, on 6 Nov (AFa); early dates are 26-27 Oct. The only other report was of one at LNB 27 Nov (BP).

Ovenbird: HY birds were banded at CSP 5 and 6 Sep (JL) and at Neale Woods, Douglas Co, 1 Aug (RS). Breeding occurs in the north and east.

Louisiana Waterthrush: A study at ICSP during the summer was summarized as follows: "We (SSc, JCa, WRS) surveyed the drainages in Indian Cave SP and all of the Louisiana Waterthrushes detected were restricted to 3 adjacent streams near the south end of the park in a limited area where the streams have emergent rocks and steep banks and pass through areas of continuous forest." Six territories were discerned; a total of 9 ad and 4 juv waterthrushes were identified plus one of unknown age, and one active nest was located. All ICSP birds had departed by 25 Aug (SSc). Only 2 of the 4 known territories on Stone Creek, PRSP, produced juvs this year (SSc).

Northern Waterthrush: Of interest was one that was observed at the NGPC Headquarters in Lincoln 30 Sep-8 Oct (JGJ); not only was it there for those 9 days, but it was 5th-latest on record. Expected last dates are 27-30 Sep.

Blue-winged Warbler: The only report was of one at WP 7 Sep (LE); this is only the 14th fall report of this species on record.

This Smith's Longspur was photographed by Tom Johnson in Thayer Co., 27 Nov 2015. There are fewer than 30 fall records for the state, 4 in Dec, but wintering has not been documented.

Black-and-white Warbler: A first fall fem at Mercer Woods, Omaha, 18-19 Aug (JR) was most likely a rather early migrant; early expected dates for migrants are 12-15 Aug. Evidence for breeding in the Missouri River Valley is lacking.

Prothonotary Warbler: No reports were received, nor were there any reports received during the summer, despite the fact that nest-building was underway at FF in May.

Tennessee Warbler: One in Dundy Co 11 Oct (JV, MK) was westerly. This location is close to the Panhandle, where there are 14 fall records.

Orange-crowned Warbler: The long fall migration period of this species was book-ended by one in Deuel Co 24 Aug (JGJ) and 3 at FF 5 Nov (PSt); early and late expected dates are 23-24 Aug and 8-10 Nov. Two subspecies have been presumed to occur in Nebraska, although there have been no documented reports of the Rocky Mountains subspecies *Oreothlypis celata orestera*. This year, the banding efforts at CSP (JL) and WHNC (HG) confirmed the occurrence of *O. c. orestera.* At CSP, *O. c. orestera* were banded 4-29 Sep (JL) and at WHNC 8 Sep-8 Oct (HG), with one there 10 Oct (KD). On 22 Sep, 6 *O. c. celata* and 5 *O. c. orestera* were banded at CSP (JL). All other reports of *O. c. celata* were from the east (JR, SMa, CNK), and no *O. c. orestera* were reported other than those at CSP and WHNC. The last dates cited here for *O. c. orestera* are about one month earlier than last dates for the species in the east (presumed *O. c. celata*).

Nashville Warbler: Most reports are from the east, a few in the central, but this species is less-than-annual in the Panhandle. Thus one at McCook 22 Oct (LE) was unexpected that close to the Panhandle, where there are only 12 records. Two subspecies occur in Nebraska; the vast majority of migrants are eastern *Oreothlypis ruficapilla ruficapilla,* but there are 3 Panhandle reports of the western subspecies *O. r. ridgwayi* (also known as Calaveras Warbler) of a total of 12 reports for the species there. At least 3 sightings of Calaveras Warbler were reported from WP 23 Sep-3 Oct (NA); video was taken, along with descriptions, but the reports, based mostly on tail-wagging and slight differences in plumage coloration, were equivocal, as eastern *O. r. ruficapilla* also wags its tail on occasion (RW).

Connecticut Warbler: None of this rare eastern fall migrant were reported.

MacGillivray's Warbler: Only two were reported, singles at CSP 7 Sep (AK) and in Dundy Co 11 Oct (SRi). The latter is rather late, although there is another 11 Oct record and one for 13 Oct. Last expected dates are 4-6 Oct.

Mourning Warbler: Singles at WP 24 Aug and BOL 25 Aug (both LE) were rather early; early dates are 21-22 Aug.

Kentucky Warbler: This species is rare in fall, restricted to the east. There were 4 reports 31 Aug-25 Sep (in the expected migration window) for which the identification was either equivocal or no details were provided; this is a tough fall identification.

Common Yellowthroat: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

American Redstart: One of only 2 records for Oct in the east was a presumed HY bird at Mercer Woods, Omaha, 4 Oct (JR). There are additional Oct dates in the west 5-19 Oct, presumably migrants from different breeding populations than those in eastern Nebraska; last expected dates for the state are 30 Sep-2 Oct.

Northern Parula: Rarely-reported in fall, there were only 2 reports, both from Douglas Co: 12 Sep (KGo) and 16 Sep (JR). Last expected dates are 2-4 Oct.

Magnolia Warbler: One in an Otoe Co yard 13 and 16 Oct (SQ) was rather late; last dates for this late-migrating migrant are 22-24 Oct.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Reports were routine of this uncommon statewide migrant.

Blackburnian Warbler: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern migrant.

Yellow Warbler: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: An imm fem at FF 21 Aug (RS) was rather early; early dates are 18-21 Aug.

Blackpoll Warbler: None of this less-than-annual statewide fall migrant were reported.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: There were 2 reports of this rare but annual-in-fall migrant: an ad male was in Cass Co 28 Sep (KSc, details) and a fem was at Towl Park, Omaha, 6 Oct (NR).

Palm Warbler: This species is less-than-annual in fall, and so an unexpected influx, reflected by no less than 7 reports, most with good details, was very unusual. The reports were: 19 Sep Fillmore Co (JGJ, details), 19 Sep Sarpy Co (GJo, details), 24 Sep Dakota Co (WF, details), 27 Sep LSWP (MW photo, BHe), 7 Oct Johnson Co (WF, details), 9 Oct Sarpy Co (SMa, JMa photo), and 9 Oct Washington Co (CPr, details).

Pine Warbler: One in Omaha 4 Oct (JR) was about the 25th record in the east, and 41st overall for the state in fall. This species has been reported more often in recent years.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler: Reports were as expected from the Panhandle in the period 5 Sep-6 Oct, several banded (JL, HG, MW, JR, BHe).

Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler: The 70 at BOL 26 Sep (ERa) was a good count; highs are 100-129.

Yellow-throated Warbler: None were reported. This species leaves early and is rarely observed in fall; last dates are in mid-Sep however.

Townsend's Warbler: Reports were routine of this fairly common western migrant.

Black-throated Green Warbler: In contrast to other uncommon fall migrant warblers, there were numerous reports of Black-throated Greens, some 30, most of single birds, all but one from the east as expected, in the period 15 Aug-6 Oct (m. ob.). One was early at Mercer Woods, Omaha, 15 Aug (JR); early expected dates are 23-25 Aug. There is one earlier date, 4 Aug. The only report away from the east this fall was of one in Sherman Co 14 Sep (WF). A good count was the 4 in FF 4 Oct (SSc); there are two higher counts, both of 5 (!).

Canada Warbler: The 6 reports 20 Aug-26 Sep (JR, ERa, LE, CNK), all of singles, were more than usual for fall.

Wilson's Warbler: Fall migrants are much more numerous in the west than in the east; 32 were counted in EAC (MW, JR, BHe), compared with best eastern tally of 5 at WP 12 Sep (ERa).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Reports were routine of this uncommon western migrant.

Green-tailed Towhee: The only report of this less-than-annual in fall Panhandle migrant was of one at Oliver Res 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe; photos). There are about 30 fall records in all, in the period 28 Aug-16 Oct.

Spotted Towhee: The 35 "mostly young" birds banded at WHNC 24 Aug and the 20 more the next day (HG) were part of a record total of 76 banded there for the season in the period 24 Aug-7 Oct (HG). This final date matches the expected mid-Oct arrival in the southeast, where Spotted Towhee does not breed.

Eastern Towhee: Interesting information regarding status of this species and Spotted Towhee was received from two locations, Plum Creek in Seward Co (JG) and Beaver Creek near Hendley in Furnas Co (LR, RH). Current consensus is that pure-looking Easterns mostly breed east of a line from Cedar Co through Platte, Hall, and Harlan Cos, but this is only a probability divider; along and within quite some distance from the line, anything can happen. In Seward Co, "Plum Creek has been an interesting location over the years as I have heard and seen both Eastern and Spotted Towhees as well as apparent hybrids with song and characteristics somewhere between the two species." (JG), and in Furnas Co, "When I played Spotted Towhee vocalizations for them there was absolutely no reaction from any of them. But when I played Eastern Towhee vocalizations for them there was a strong reaction from them, especially the adult male." (LR, RH). The 26 at Two Rivers SP, Douglas Co, 5 Oct (DSt) is suggestive of fall movement; most Eastern Towhees depart during Oct, but a few winter in the extreme southeast.

Cassin's Sparrow: None were reported of this rare migrant, which is rarely-reported after Jul.

American Tree Sparrow: One at Ft. Robinson SRA, Dawes Co, 22 Sep (CGe) was rather early; early dates are 22-23 Sep.

Chipping Sparrow: Two at Holmes L, Lincoln, 17 Nov (LE, details) were in line with previous documented last dates for migrants (there are several Dec and a few overwintering records). The 300 at EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) was a good tally; previous highs were 126-700.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Brewer's Sparrow: There were only 3 reports of this uncommon western Panhandle migrant; singles were at Oliver Res 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe), Exit 1 on I-80, Kimball Co 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe), and at Oliver Res 13 Sep (JRo).

Field Sparrow: One in Buffalo Co 13 Nov (BB) was tardy; last dates are 19-22 Nov. The 30 in Dodge Co 18 Sep (RSa) was a good count; highs are 30-100. Previously there have been only 21 Panhandle reports in fall, where the species is rare in summer and in migration; this fall there were 5, including banded birds at CSP 4 Oct (JL, HG), 29 Sep (3; JL), and 22 Sep (JL), one at Toadstool Park, Sioux Co, 24 Sep (FMa), and 2 at EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe). Breeders in the Panhandle and north-central Nebraska are of the western subspecies *Spizella pusilla arenacea,* which has reduced facial markings compared with eastern birds.

Vesper Sparrow: The 300 at EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) was a good count; highs range into the thousands, however, with huge flocks occasionally encountered in western Nebraska.

Lark Sparrow: One in Douglas Co 21 Oct (JR) was rather late; previous last dates were 19-22 Oct. Counts of 50 at two locations, EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) and CLNWR 15 Aug (KBo), were additions to the list of high counts, which were 50-89.

Lark Bunting: Reports were routine of this abundant migrant west, uncommon central.

Savannah Sparrow: One in Fillmore Co 24 Nov (WF, details) was tardy; previous last dates were 21-22 Nov. There are a few Dec-Jan records but only one of overwintering.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One in Lancaster Co 20 Oct (EB) was rather late; previous last dates were 18-19 Oct.

Henslow's Sparrow: Two in Thurston Co 5 Aug (SSh) were a little north of Stanton Co, where the previous northernmost summer records were found. In both counties, CRP grassland was occupied.

Le Conte's Sparrow: Previous last dates were 5-9 Nov, and so the surprising number of late dates this fall are of interest: 3 were at Prairie Queen L, Sarpy Co, 7 Nov (EB) with one still there 13 Nov (BRe), one was in Clay Co 10 Nov (WF), and one was at LSWNP 15 Nov (CVD).

Nelson's Sparrow: One in Hall Co 18 Oct (EBa) was a bit westerly. There were about 15 reports of 1-2 birds 27 Sep-18 Oct (m. ob.), a good showing for this species in fall.

Fox Sparrow: Westerly reports, where this species is rare, were of one at Oliver Res 8 Nov (RTe), and 2 at Wood L, Cherry Co, 29 Oct (WF).

Song Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central migrant, uncommon west.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Reports were routine of this common eastern and central migrant, uncommon west.

Swamp Sparrow: One at Zorinsky L, Omaha, 7 Aug (SQ) was hard to explain; breeding does not apparently occur there, although this species has bred at Jack Sinn.

White-throated Sparrow: This species is a rare migrant in the Panhandle, and thus significant were a HY bird in Cheyenne Co 13 Sep (JRo) and the 7 banded at CSP 17 Sep (also rather early) through 9 Oct (JL). The Cheyenne Co bird was early, as was the first banded at CSP 17 Sep; previous early dates were 14-15 Sep.

Harris's Sparrow: None were reported from the Panhandle, where rare, but close were 2 in Dundy Co 14 Oct (DGe) and at Wood Lake, Cherry Co, 29 Oct (WF).

White-crowned Sparrow: Rather early were an imm in EAC 5 Sep and singles at Oliver Res 7 Sep and Exit 1, I-80, Kimball Co, 7 Sep (all sightings MW, JR, BHe). Early dates are 25 Aug-2 Sep. All banded birds at CSP were of the common pale-lored subspecies *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii* (JL). The dark-lored subspecies *Z. l. leucophrys* is rare in Nebraska.

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco: The only report was of an early migrant in Scotts Bluff Co 12 Sep, where breeding is unknown (KD); early dates are 30 Sep-2 Oct.

Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Dark-eyed (Cassiar) Junco: A junco photographed in Omaha 22 Oct (PL) appeared to be a mix of "Oregon" Junco and "Slate-colored" Junco, perhaps closer to Oregon, but likely assignable to the variable "Cassiar" Junco population (WRS, EB). No other "Cassiar" Juncos were reported.

Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco: One in EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) was earliest on record; expected early dates are 10-13 Sep. Easterly, one in Lancaster Co 24 Sep (ERa) was record early there; early dates are 11-19 Oct.

Dark-eyed (Pink-sided) Junco: One at Oliver Res 7 Sep (MW, JR, BHe) and another banded at CSP 8 Sep (JL) were early; early dates are 13-17 Sep. One was reported in Nebraska City 20 Nov (SQ, details); reports of this form in the east, where it is less-than-annual in occurrence, should hopefully be accompanied by a photo.

Summer Tanager: Only the second fall Panhandle record was a yellowish individual at Oliver Res 7 Sep (MW photos, JR, BHe). A flurry of tardy

Summer Tanagers was in Omaha: latest was a probable HY male at Mercer Woods 21 Oct (JR, photo), and singles were at both Mercer Woods and Orchard Hill Greenstrip 30 Sep (JR). Expected last dates are 28-30 Sep, but there are only 6 dates in Oct, one of which was of one that lingered until 27 Dec.

Scarlet Tanager: One was westerly in Phelps Co 13 Aug (LB); this species is uncommon west to central Nebraska in fall migration.

Western Tanager: Reports were routine of this uncommon western migrant.

Northern Cardinal: There were three reports from the Panhandle, including two from Scotts Bluff Co, where this species has a couple of small populations along the North Platte River: 12 Sep (KD) and 26 Nov (PRa). Perhaps more significantly, 2 in Deuel Co 11 Aug (RSt) were one of only about 5 records in the South Platte River Valley west of Ogallala, where it is fairly common. It occurs along the South Platte River Valley in northeast Colorado, but only in small numbers.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Tardy were 2-3 at Towl Park, Omaha, 6-8 Oct (NR, JR) and one at Orchard Hill Greenstrip, Omaha, 10 Oct (JR); previous last dates were 7-11 Oct. These birds had "orangey" underparts as well as fairly extensive black streaks below, suggestive of HY birds or possibly intergrades with Black-headed Grosbeak (JR, NR). Perhaps such birds migrate a bit later than phenotypically pure *Pheucticus* grosbeaks.

Black-headed Grosbeak: Reports were routine of this common western and central migrant.

Blue Grosbeak: An ad with 3 dependent young in Sarpy Co 8 Sep (CNK) provided a late breeding record.

Lazuli Bunting: By far the best single-location count on record was the 22 in EAC 5 Sep, consisting of family groups in the area (MW, JR, BHe). Lazuli Bunting ad females lingered longer than usual at both CSP and WHNC banding stations; at CSP, 3 were banded 25 Sep (JL) and at WHNC, 2 that had been captured previously during the fall were re-captured 4 Oct (HG), along with a third caught for the first time. Previous last dates were 21-23 Sep.

Indigo Bunting: Last dates away from Missouri River Valley counties are 18-21 Sep. This fall, there were two reports of tardy individuals: one was banded at CSP 27 Sep (JL), and one was in Lincoln Co 22 Sep (TJW). One in Washington Co 9 Oct (CPr) was rather late; last dates in the Missouri River Valley counties are 12-13 Oct.

Dickcissel: The 46 in Lancaster Co 6 Aug was a good count; at this date these are probably local breeders and offspring. Most depart by early Sep. Following the relatively low number of summering birds reported in the north and west, where occurrence is highly variable from year to year (Summer Report), only two were reported for this period: singles at VNWR 1 Aug (MBs) and in Sheridan Co 5 Aug (TG).

Bobolink: Latest on record was one in fall/basic plumage at Prairie Queen L, Sarpy Co, 10 Oct (CO, photo).

Red-winged Blackbird: Largest flocks occur in Nov-Dec; 17,500 were in Lincoln Co 9 Nov (TJW); a flock of 45,000+ was in Lincoln Co 27 Oct 2014 (TJW). High fall tally is 100,000.

Eastern Meadowlark: Departure in fall is difficult to determine, and some might remain rather late in the south; one was singing "a bit off kilter" at BOL 13 Nov (TG) and there are a few Nov and two Dec records of singing/calling birds west to Lincoln Co. Most appear to depart by late Oct.

Western Meadowlark: A large flock of 95 birds was at Sutherland Res 16 Nov (RGe) and 113 were in Thayer Co 18 Nov (LE); it appears that most move south in Oct-Nov, a bit later than Eastern Meadowlark, but many Westerns linger later into Dec and some overwinter in the extreme southeast.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Rusty Blackbird: Reports were routine of this uncommon eastern migrant.

Brewer's Blackbird: Reports were routine of this common western and central migrant, uncommon east.

Common Grackle: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Great-tailed Grackle: The 200 in Lincoln Co 27 Nov (TSh) was a good count; highs are 200-300.

Brown-headed Cowbird: Reports were routine of this abundant statewide migrant.

Orchard Oriole: Reports were routine of this common statewide migrant.

Bullock's Oriole: None were reported of this fairly common western fall migrant; departure is early, mostly during Aug.

Baltimore Oriole: There are an impressive 12 records for Nov-Dec of this species, but surprising this late fall were two more, at different Omaha feeders: one in a mid-Omaha yard 19-29 Nov (JB) and a male in west Omaha 29 Nov (AD fide CNK).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch: None were reported of this rare western winter visitor, which usually arrives in Nov.

House Finch: Reports were routine of this common statewide resident.

Purple Finch: There were 5 reports, all of singles: in Bellevue 18 Oct (JLL), at BOL 2 and 16 Nov (LE), in Cass Co 28 Nov (KSc) and in Brown Co 13 Nov (LE).

Cassin's Finch: None were reported of this rare Panhandle winter visitor. Arrival is erratic, but often in Oct-Nov.

Red Crossbill: Most were on the Pine Ridge, where no fewer than 179 were banded at CSP (JL); other reports from CSP were of 6 on 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe), one on 7 Sep (KD), and 9 on 25 Oct (JSS). Nearby, 25 were at EAC 5 Sep (MW, JR, BHe), and 4 were in Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux Co, 6 Sep (MW, JR, BHe). Only 3 were reported from WHNC, those on 23 Aug (JL); this is likely related to moving the banding station this year away from the feeders at the Nature Center due to construction (HG). Away from the Pine Ridge, there were 7 reports scattered across the northern part of the state involving a total of 33 birds (m. ob), including one in a Dixon Co yard 17 Nov that was the "first there for 15 years" (JJ).

Common Redpoll: None were reported during the period of this erratic but generally annual winter visitor.

Pine Siskin: The reports outlined an interesting progression into and across the state during the period. All reports were from the Panhandle beginning 27 Aug, when one was at WHNC (HG); peak count was the 30 banded at CSP 5 Oct (JL). Away from the Panhandle, first reported were 2 at Stapleton 5 Oct (TJW), and the east was reached in mid-Oct, when 3 were in Dodge Co 10 Oct

(D&JP) and 3-5 were at SCP 12-14 Oct (DGe, E&GP). Numbers began to build in the east in late Nov, when 12-25 were in an Otoe Co yard 27-30 Nov (SQ).

Lesser Goldfinch: There were numerous reports, all but one from the banding station at WHNC. Two were found nearby in southeastern Banner Co 24 Aug (JGJ). At WHNC, 5 were banded 26 Aug-8 Oct (HG, JL), including a fem "still in breeding condition" 26 Aug (HG).

American Goldfinch: Best count was the 150 at Prairie Queen L, Sarpy Co, 22 Nov (MSh). High fall count is 265.

Evening Grosbeak: None were reported of this uncommon but erratic northwestern winter visitor.

House Sparrow: Best count was the 175 at Henry Doorly Zoo, Omaha, 6 Aug (BAi); such high counts occur, of course, where humans and a readily-available food source are present.

2015 Fall Migration Bird Banding at Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area

Holly Garrod
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It was a different season of bird banding this year at Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. Due to construction at the nature center, the banding station was moved farther down the road to one of the picnic shelters. The habitat remained mostly the same, with Ponderosa Pine and multispecies-shrub understory dominating the unique ridge landscape characteristic of Wildcat Hills. The new site provided more shrub understory, but lacked the running water of Turkey Creek and the bird feeders at the nature center. Bird Conservatory of the Rockies (formerly Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory) has been banding at Wildcat Hills for nine years now and this marks the first year the banding site was relocated.

This year we ended the season with a total of 364 birds of 34 species banded over a seven-week period. How does this stack up to previous years? On average, 509 birds are banded each year at Wildcat Hills, this year ranking the third lowest. However, annual captures have ranged widely, from a low of 227 birds in 2007 to a high of 915 birds in 2012. While the number of individuals banded this year was low the number of species banded was slightly above the average of 32 species annually. The number of species banded per year has ranged from 17 in 2007 to 41 in 2014. I reviewed the data and there is no apparent correlation between number of individuals and number of species banded. Possible influences on the seasonal variation might include weather and/or resource availability.

Moving the station this year provided an interesting opportunity to sample birds utilizing Wildcat Hills habitat away from the human presence surrounding the nature center. The change to a denser shrub and forest habitat proved more favorable to species such as Orange-crowned Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, both of which were captured in record numbers this year. Numbers of Orange-crowned Warblers increased dramatically, from an average of seven birds per year to 46 this year. Only six Ruby-crowned Kinglets were captured from 2007 to 2014, but 14 were captured this year. A record 76 Spotted Towhees also were captured this year, though this is only three more than the previous record from last year when the station was in its original location. This year saw an increase in Dark-eyed Junco numbers and presence of the previously-unrecorded Pink-sided subspecies. In the birding community, Wildcat Hills has been known for its high numbers of Red Crossbills, averaging 75 captures per year; 2015 proved to be the first year since 2008 when no crossbills were captured.

In contrast, captures declined noticeably for Chipping Sparrows, one of the most commonly captured species in previous years. I caught only 22 this year in contrast to an annual average of 150 with a high of 383 in 2012. This species likely prefers pine edge and more open habitat surrounding the nature center. Finch species were also down this year, including American Goldfinch, Lesser Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, and House Finch, which are usually drawn to the feeders at the nature center. This combined group averages 150 banded each year, but this year I caught only 13. While capture rate was markedly lower for Lesser Goldfinches, they were still observed almost every day of banding and continue to remain established in the area.

Rare birds for the season included a Dusky Flycatcher that was banded in early September. This is the second one ever banded here, and a notable record for the state of Nebraska. An exciting new station bird this year was a young Blue Grosbeak. Several birds returned this banding season, including a Black-capped Chickadee from 2010, a Red-breasted Nuthatch from 2012, and a Chipping Sparrow from 2011. The first Northern Saw-whet Owl ever banded at Wildcat Hills was in 2014; she made two return appearances this year, and I was pleased to see she is still doing well. Recapturing individuals from previous years at the new location suggests that at least some birds are utilizing multiple areas within Wildcat Hills. Getting recaptures of migratory species such as Chipping Sparrow shows the route fidelity of these birds. Bird banding continues to be an important technique for monitoring bird populations. Migration, particularly, is a key time to ensure these populations are healthy.

Here is the complete list of species and individuals banded for 2015:

Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Mourning Dove	4
Western Wood-Pewee	1
Least Flycatcher	1
Dusky Flycatcher	1
Cassin's Vireo	1
Warbling Vireo	1
Red-eyed Vireo	1
Black-capped Chickadee	19
Red-breasted Nuthatch	10
Pygmy Nuthatch	6
House Wren	8
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	21
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	14
Townsend's Solitaire	2
Swainson's Thrush	2
Hermit Thrush	6
Gray Catbird	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	46
Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler	3
Myrtle Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Wilson's Warbler	13
Yellow-breasted Chat	2
Spotted Towhee	76
Chipping Sparrow	22
Lark Sparrow	2
Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow	5
Oregon Dark-eyed Junco	17
Pink-sided Dark-eyed Junco	10
Slate-colored Dark-eyed Junco	5
Unidentified Dark-eyed Junco	46
Blue Grosbeak	1
Lazuli Bunting	1
House Finch	6
Pine Siskin	1
Lesser Goldfinch	5
American Goldfinch	1

South Sioux City Fall Field Days

by Janis Paseka

The 2015 NOU Fall Field Days took place in South Sioux City at the Americas Best Value Inn on Sept. 25-27. There were about 50 in attendance at the meeting which was organized by Dave Heidt, Robin Harding, Jan Johnson and Betty Grenon.

On Friday evening Ponca State Park Superintendent Jeff Fields told the group about the changes that have happened in Ponca State Park since its beginning in 1934 as a Civilian Conservation Corps camp. It is the third oldest state park in Nebraska and now encompasses 2400 acres. It boasts one of the oldest bur oaks in the state, which has been dated to 1644. Ponca State Park is on an unchannelized 59-mile reach of the Missouri River which is now protected as a Scenic River, and the park has been designated an Important Bird Area. Changes happening to the park now include stabilization of the river banks and controlled burns to allow new bur oak growth as well as increasing efforts to make the park welcoming to the public and to encourage nature appreciation.

On Saturday evening, Mark Brogie, science instructor in the Creighton Public Schools, led a bird identification workshop using paired photos of birds which can be difficult to differentiate. This included Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Eared and Horned Grebes, Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, and Warbling and Philadelphia Vireos. Mark and Ellen Brogie also brought dozens of bird skins from the Wayne State College collections (collected and prepared by Wayne Mollhoff) for the group to study.

Field trip destinations on Saturday and on Sunday morning included Ponca State Park, Basswood Ridge WMA, Kramper Lake (Danish Alps SRA), Big Bear Park, Winnebago Sewage Lagoons and numerous sites in Woodbury County, Iowa.

Field trips were led by Bill Flack, Bill Huser, Jan Johnson, Don Paseka, and T.J. Walker. Special thanks go to local members Bob Livermore, Jerry Probst and Rex Rundquist who led the trip to the Iowa destinations.

The total species count was 132. Some of the weekend highlights were Virginia Rail, American Golden-Plover, Black-billed Cuckoo, Peregrine Falcon, 6 swallow species, 11 warbler species and 9 sparrow species.

NOU Annual Meeting - South Sioux City

	Cedar	Dixon	Dakota	Thurston	Woodbury IA
Canada Goose	x	x	x	x	x
Wood Duck				x	x
Gadwall					x
American Wigeon					x
Mallard		x			x
Blue-winged Teal		x	x		x
Northern Shoveler		x			x
Northern Pintail		x			x
Northern Bobwhite			x		
Ring-necked Pheasant		x	x	x	
Wild Turkey		x	x	x	x
Pied-billed Grebe		x	x	x	x
Double-crested Cormorant		x	x		x
American White Pelican		x	x	x	x
Great Blue Heron	x	x	x	x	x
Great Egret					x
Cattle Egret			x		
Green Heron				x	
Turkey Vulture	x	x	x	x	
Osprey	x	x	x	x	
Bald Eagle		x	x	x	
Northern Harrier		x	x		x
Sharp-shinned Hawk		x	x	x	x
Cooper's Hawk		x	x	x	
Broad-winged Hawk		x	x	x	x
Swainson's Hawk		x		x	
Red-tailed Hawk	x	x	x	x	x
Virginia Rail					x
Sora					x

NOU Annual Meeting - South Sioux City

	Cedar	Dixon	Dakota	Thurston	Woodbury IA
American Coot			x		x
American Golden-Plover					x
Killdeer	x	x	x	x	x
Solitary Sandpiper		x			
Greater Yellowlegs		x			
Lesser Yellowlegs		x			
Least Sandpiper		x	x		x
Baird's Sandpiper		x			x
Pectoral Sandpiper		x			
Dowitcher species		x			
Wilson's Snipe			x		
Wilson's Phalarope		x			
Bonaparte's Gull	x				
Franklin's Gull	x	x	x	x	x
Ring-billed Gull	x	x			x
Common Tern	x				
Rock Pigeon	x	x	x	x	x
Eurasian Collared-Dove	x	x	x	x	x
Mourning Dove	x	x	x	x	x
Black-billed Cuckoo				x	
Eastern Screech-Owl				x	
Great Horned Owl		x		x	
Barred Owl		x	x		
Common Nighthawk			x		
Chimney Swift	x	x	x	x	x
Hummingbird species		x			
Belted Kingfisher	x	x	x	x	x
Red-headed Woodpecker		x	x		x
Red-bellied Woodpecker	x	x	x	x	x

NOU Annual Meeting - South Sioux City

	Cedar	Dixon	Dakota	Thurston	Woodbury IA
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			x	x	
Downy Woodpecker	x	x	x	x	x
Hairy Woodpecker		x	x	x	x
Northern Flicker	x	x	x	x	x
American Kestrel	x	x	x	x	x
Merlin			x	x	
Peregrine Falcon		x			x
Olive-sided Flycatcher				x	x
Eastern Wood-Pewee		x	x	x	
Least Flycatcher		x			
Eastern Phoebe			x	x	x
Blue-headed Vireo		x	x	x	
Warbling Vireo		x	x	x	x
Red-eyed Vireo		x		x	x
Blue Jay		x	x	x	x
American Crow	x	x	x	x	x
Purple Martin			x		
Tree Swallow			x	x	x
Northern Rough-winged Swallow			x		x
Bank Swallow		x		x	
Cliff Swallow				x	
Barn Swallow	x	x	x	x	x
Black-capped Chickadee		x	x	x	x
White-breasted Nuthatch		x	x	x	x
House Wren		x	x	x	
Sedge Wren		x	x	x	x
Marsh Wren		x	x	x	x
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		x	x	x	x
Eastern Bluebird		x	x	x	x

NOU Annual Meeting - South Sioux City

	Cedar	Dixon	Dakota	Thurston	Woodbury IA
American Robin	x	x	x	x	x
Gray Catbird		x	x	x	x
Brown Thrasher		x	x	x	x
European Starling	x	x	x	x	x
American Pipit			x		
Cedar Waxwing		x		x	x
Ovenbird				x	
Black-and-white Warbler		x	x	x	
Tennessee Warbler		x			
Orange-crowned Warbler		x	x	x	x
Nashville Warbler		x	x	x	x
Common Yellowthroat			x	x	x
American Redstart		x	x	x	
Magnolia Warbler		x	x		
Yellow Warbler		x		x	x
Palm Warbler					x
Yellow-rumped Warbler	x	x	x	x	x
Black-throated Green Warbler		x			
Canada Warbler		x			
Wilson's Warbler		x	x		
Spotted Towhee			x		
Eastern Towhee		x	x	x	
Chipping Sparrow	x	x	x	x	x
Clay-colored Sparrow		x	x	x	
Field Sparrow		x	x	x	
Vesper Sparrow			x	x	x
Savannah Sparrow		x	x		x
LeConte's Sparrow			x		
Song Sparrow		x	x	x	x

NOU Annual Meeting - South Sioux City

	Cedar	Dixon	Dakota	Thurston	Woodbury IA
Lincoln's Sparrow		x	x	x	x
White-throated Sparrow		x	x	x	
Scarlet Tanager			x		
Northern Cardinal		x	x	x	x
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		x	x	x	x
Blue Grosbeak					x
Indigo Bunting		x	x	x	
Dickcissel				x	
Red-winged Blackbird		x	x	x	x
Western Meadowlark			x		x
Brewer's Blackbird					x
Common Grackle		x	x	x	x
Brown-headed Cowbird			x		x
House Finch			x	x	
American Goldfinch	x	x	x	x	x
House Sparrow	x	x	x	x	x
County totals	31	97	94	86	84

Nebraska total: 123
Iowa total: 80
Grand total: 132

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